

447. YOUNG MASAI WOMEN. (ONE OF THEM IS ABOUT TO MARRY, SO SHE IS HAVING IRON WIRE COILED ROUND HER LEGS)



They might even be styled ostentatiously naked in this respect, though I have never known them to be guilty of any gesture of deliberate indelicacy. Young warriors going to battle swathe round their waists as many yards of red calico as they can get hold of, and will further throw pieces of calico over their shoulders as capes. They also wear huge mantles of birds' feathers, in shape and volume like the fur capes worn by coachmen in cold weather. A great circle of ostrich plumes is often worn round the face. When decorated for warfare, they tie fringes of long white hair tightly below the knee, generally on one leg—the left. This white hair is either derived from goats or from the skin of the colobus monkey. Some of the eastern Masai make handsome capes of the black and white colobus fur, which are worn over the chest. Unmarried girls may wear a few bracelets, but as soon as a young Masai woman, or “dito,” is about to marry, she has coils of thick iron wire wound round her legs (as in the illustration). She will also wear armlets and bracelets of this same wire, and perhaps an additional armlet or two of ivory. Huge coils of the same thick iron wire may be worn round the neck in addition to the “catherine-wheel” ornaments and uncounted strings of beads. Or she may have round her neck a great fringe of leather thongs, to which are fastened large beads. Some of their supple leather garments are charmingly sewn with beads as an edging. The young men do not disdain sometimes to clothe themselves in one of these huge cloaks of ox hide, which may cover them from the neck to the ankles. The men wear sandals of hide, especially when travelling.

The *dwellings* of the Masai are of two very distinct kinds. The agricultural Masai who are still to be found about Elgon and the south end of Baringo (there are other relics of them in East Africa, at Taveita, etc.) build houses very like those of their Bantu neighbours—round huts made with walls of reeds or sticks, surmounted by a conical, grass-thatched roof. The cattle-keeping Masai, on the contrary, build dwellings of quite peculiar construction, unlike those of any other Negro tribe. These are low, continuous houses (not more than six feet in height), which may go round or nearly round the enclosure of the settlement. They are *flat-roofed*, and are built of a framework of sticks with strong partitions dividing the continuous structure into separate compartments which are separate dwellings, each furnished with a low, oblong door. A good deal of brushwood is worked into the sides and roofs of these rows of houses to make a foundation which will retain the plaster of mud and cow-dung which is next applied. The mud and cow-dung is thickly laid on the flat roofs, and is not usually permeated by the rain. In the villages of the agricultural Masai there are, in addition to the houses, numerous granaries holding supplies of corn and beans. The walls of these granaries

MUTILATION NOTED

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448. MASAI MATRON

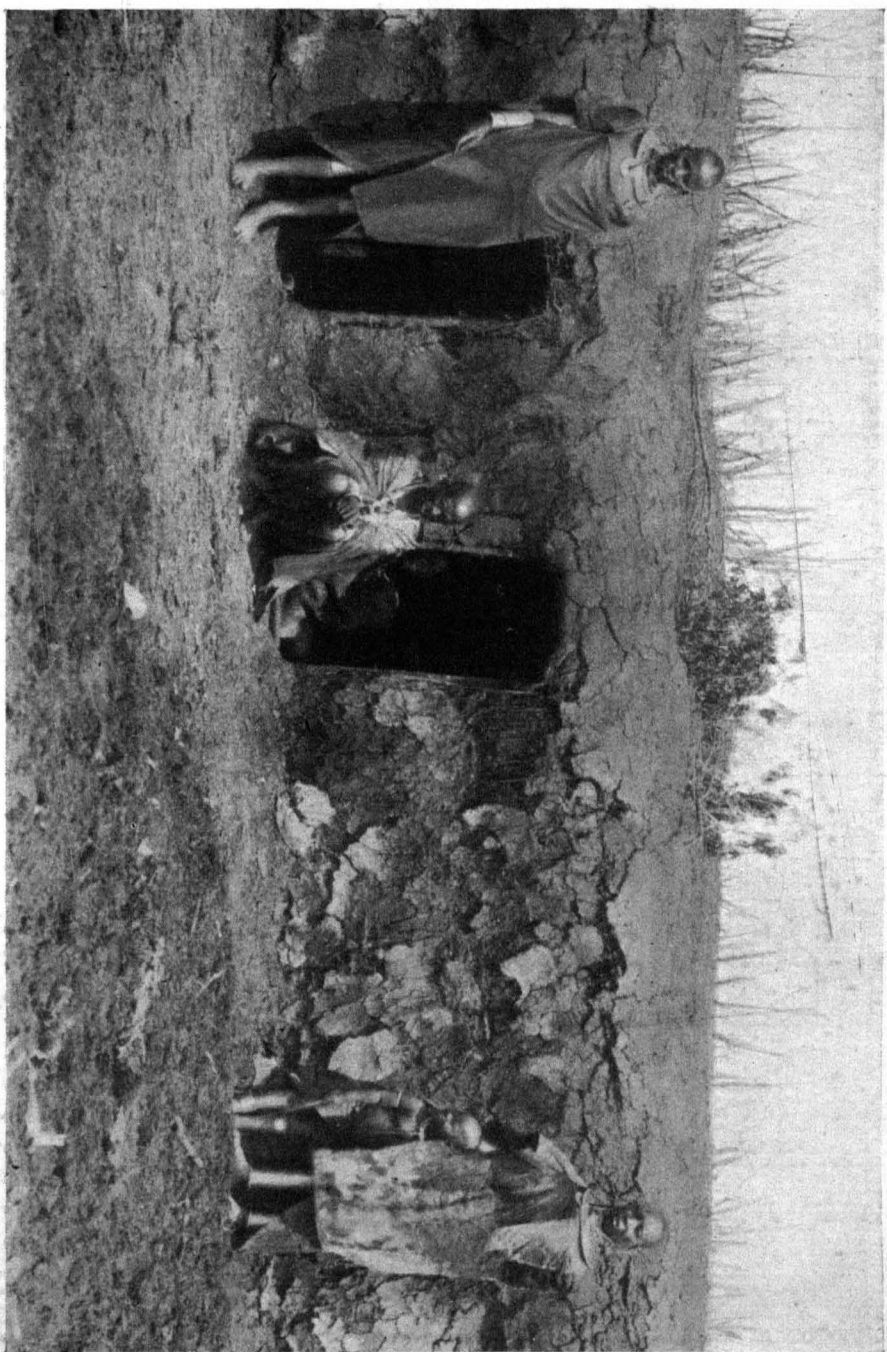
are plastered with mud and cow-dung. The villages of both sections of the Masai are surrounded by fences. In the case of the agricultural Masai these are strong palisades with openings at intervals that are carefully guarded by doors made of huge hewn planks. With the pastoral Masai the hedge surrounding the settlement is of thorn bushes, and is merely arranged so as to keep off wild beasts, the pastoral Masai not having hitherto had occasion to fear the attacks of their fellow-men. Inside the villages there are one or more cattle kraals surrounded by independent hedges of thorns or sticks, and their enclosures are fenced in for sheep and goats. Inside the continuous houses of the pastoral Masai

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about these warrior villages, then usefulness in herding cattle and milking cows and general break-up of the Masai system of pastoral life which has come about through the repeated cattle plagues and the European administration of their country, they are rapidly beginning to live more after the normal negro fashion, in villages inhabited alike by married and unmarried men, girls and married women. Every village elects a head-man, who settles all disputes and acts as leader of the warriors in case of any fighting.

Neither agricultural nor pastoral Masai are *hunters of game* in the same



419. HORSES OF THE PASTORAL MASAII

sense as the other Negro tribes of the Protectorate. The grown-up men never molest zebras, antelopes, or harmless wild beasts, though boys may sometimes capture the fawns of gazelles, and are also given to the



450. HOUSES OF THE AGRICULTURAL MASAI (ENJÁMUSI)

shooting of birds with arrows, as birds' feathers are required for certain of their ceremonies or for the making of head-dresses or capes for the warriors. The Masai, however, regard the buffalo, eland, and kudu (the eland especially) as being closely related to their own cattle—in fact, the buffalo they regard as simply the wild ox, and the eland as being a thorough bovine. The buffalo is now nearly extinct in the countries inhabited by the Masai, but in former times they would attack it with spears (many warriors taking part in the hunt) and kill it in order to obtain leather for making their shields. The eland and kudu are not far off extinction also, but in former days the Masai ate the flesh of the eland and killed the kudu in order to obtain the horns of the male, which are in great request as trumpets. The pastoral Masai not only do not *fish* in any of the lakes and rivers, but they regard fish as a most unwholesome food. The agricultural Masai obtain fish by trapping and spearing, and eat it in much the same way as do their Bantu neighbours. The agricultural Masai also keep a few fowls, and eat them, together with

their eggs; but fowls and eggs are absolutely eschewed by the pastoral Masai, who never keep this domestic bird.

The *domestic animals* of both divisions of this race are cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, and dogs. The cattle are of the humped zebu type, and do not differ in any important respect from the other humped domestic cattle of Eastern Africa. As the mainstay of their existence, the pastoral Masai attach enormous importance to their herds of cattle; and these animals, having been brought up from birth under the constant handling of man, woman, and child, are extremely docile to their owners, with the sole exception of milk-giving. Here the Masai cow, as is so often the case among the domestic cattle of Africa, is capricious, and, from a European point of view, very tiresome. She will withhold her milk invariably if the calf is not present to her sight or sense of smell; yet her senses are easily deceived, inasmuch as she will often yield milk when a stuffed calf is held before her, even if it be little more than the skin of the dead calf roughly filled out with straw. The milking of the cows is usually done by the women twice a day, and generally in a special building erected in the village—a building in which the young calves are kept at night. In the warriors' villages, however, milking is



451. A VILLAGE OF THE AGRICULTURAL MASAI (ENJAMUSI)

sometimes done by the boys who herd the cattle; and all Masai men are adepts at milking both cows and goats, for which reason they are much in request as herdsmen in the employ of Europeans. The Masai

castrate their cattle when the young bulls are arrived at maturity. An interesting description of their procedure in this case is given by Dr. J. R. Sturdy (Government Veterinary Surgeon) in the *Veterinarian*.* A barren cow is not an infrequent occurrence in the Masai herds, and such animals are selected for fattening and slaughter, as their meat is considered to be better eating than that of the bullocks. The milk is generally kept in long, bottle-shaped gourds with leather covers. Milk is always drunk fresh, and the gourds that contain it are carefully cleaned with burning grass or with a slightly acrid liquid made from the leaves of a sage-like plant. These methods of cleaning the gourd sometimes impart a flavour to the milk not altogether agreeable to the

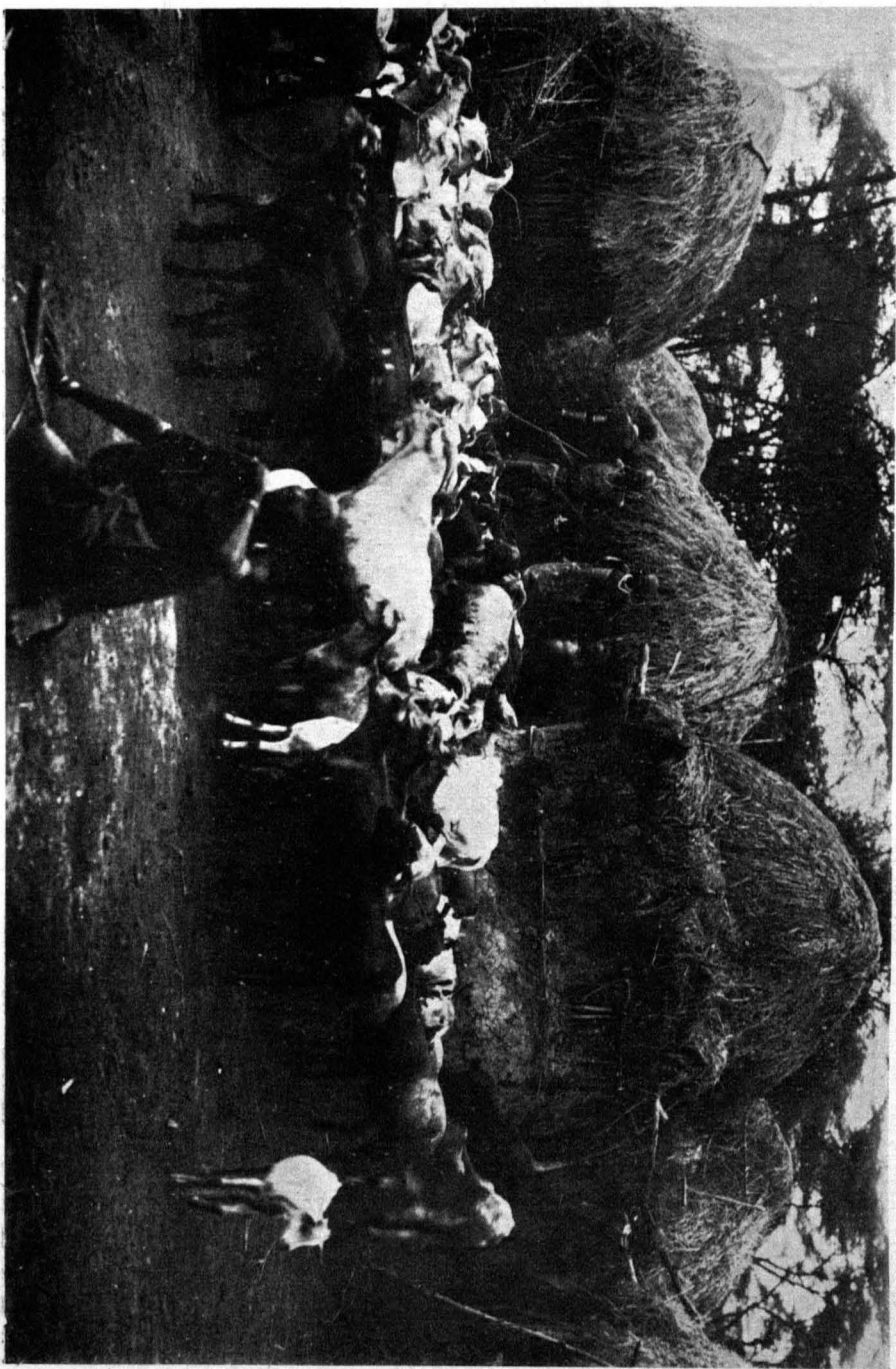


452. MASAI CATTLE, NAKURO

European palate. The cattle are always branded with some mark peculiar to the owner, who may also cut their ears in some special way so that the beast may be easily recognised as his own property. After coming back from the pasture the cattle are carefully examined, generally in close contact with a large smoky fire, so that the ticks may be removed from their bodies. The cattle are perfectly amenable to small boys, who usually act as the cowherds.

The *goats* and *sheep* belong to the breeds common to so much of Central Africa—the goat being small and plump, with short horns, while the sheep are hairy, hornless, with drooping ears and fat tails, though

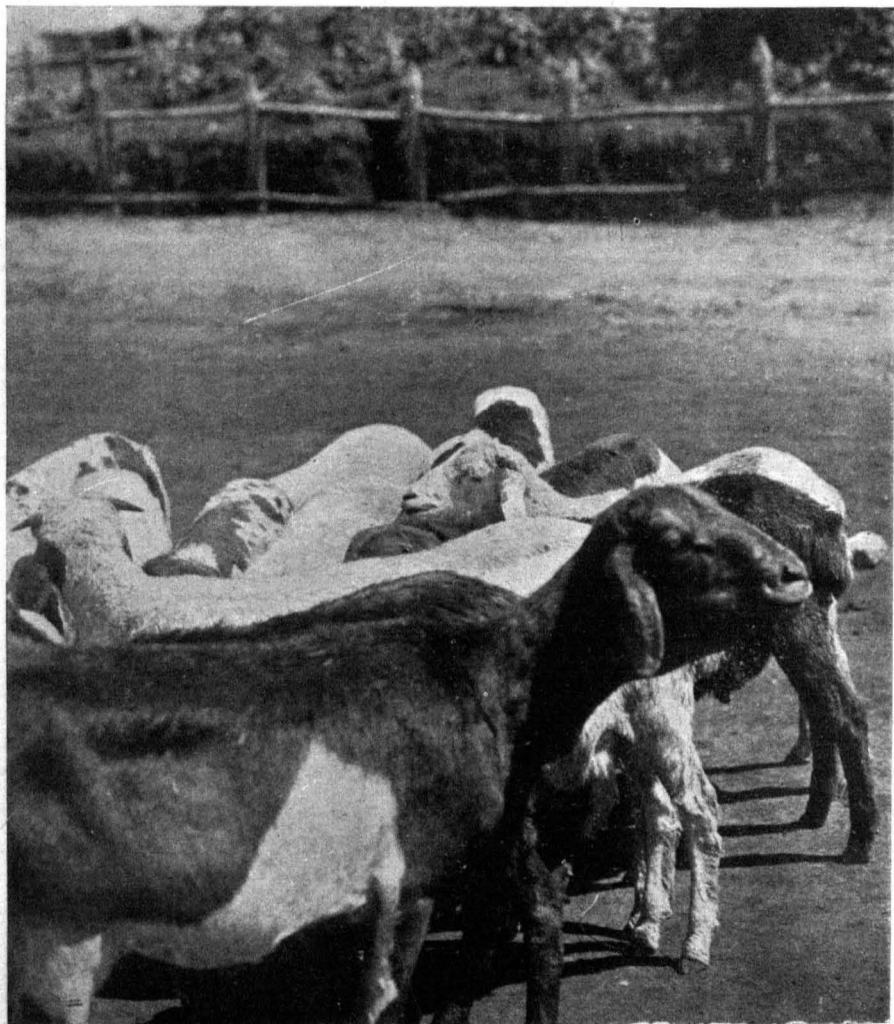
* October, 1900.



453. MASAI SHEEP AND GOATS

816 MASAI, TURKANA, SŪK, NANDI, ETC.

the fat tail is not carried to such a development as among the Bahima or in Southern Africa. Great care is taken of the lambs and kids till they are about a month old. They are suckled by their mothers twice a day,

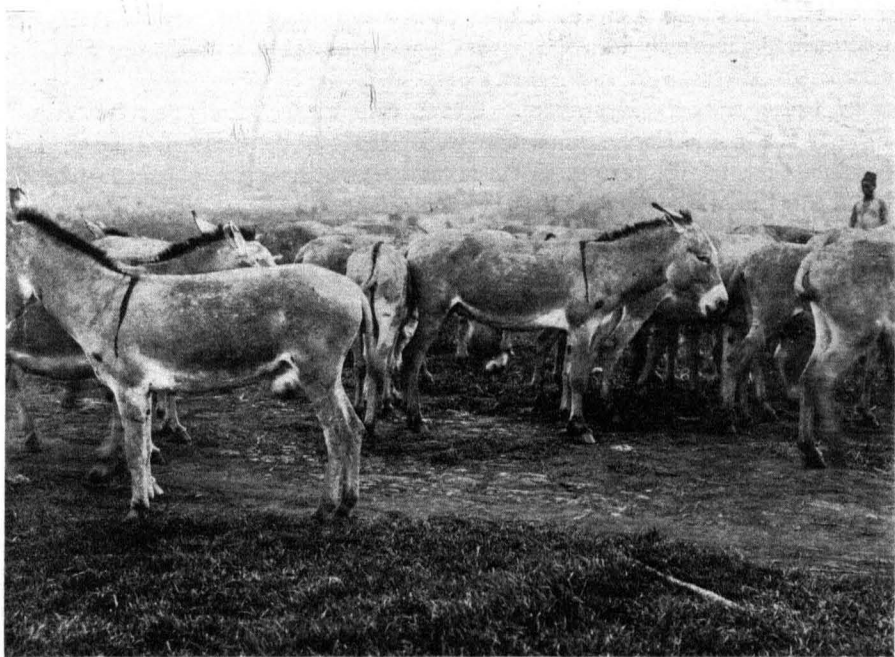


454. MASAI SHEEP

but in the interval and during the night are usually kept apart in round, beehive huts of open basketwork and thatched roofs, these huts being raised on poles about two feet above the ground. When the lambs and kids grow older, they are allowed first of all to wander freely about the

village during the daytime, and when half grown usually accompany their mothers to the pasture.

The Masai frequently possess herds of *donkeys*, and these are driven in at night within the thorn enclosure, though allowed otherwise to wander about unhampered inside the village. The ass of the Masai is the ordinary wild ass (the origin of our domestic donkey) of North-Eastern Africa (*Equus tæniopus*); indeed, it is almost impossible to see any difference between the wild ass of Nubia and the Egyptian Sudan and the domestic



455. MASAI DONKEYS

ass of the Masai, which has now become the common domestic ass of Eastern Africa and the Zanzibar coast-line. The African wild ass* is a large beast of a pinkish grey colour, with a whitish muzzle and black nose and lips. The mane is black, and so are the tips and rims of the ears. There is a black stripe all along the back to the end of the tail, and there is one broad stripe down each shoulder. Occasionally faint black stripes are seen on the legs. This animal is more nearly related to the wild asses of Asia than it is to the zebras of Africa. Its range in a wild

* The Somaliland form is a distinct species which has *no* shoulder stripe, but on the other hand, is distinctly barred on the legs with black stripes.

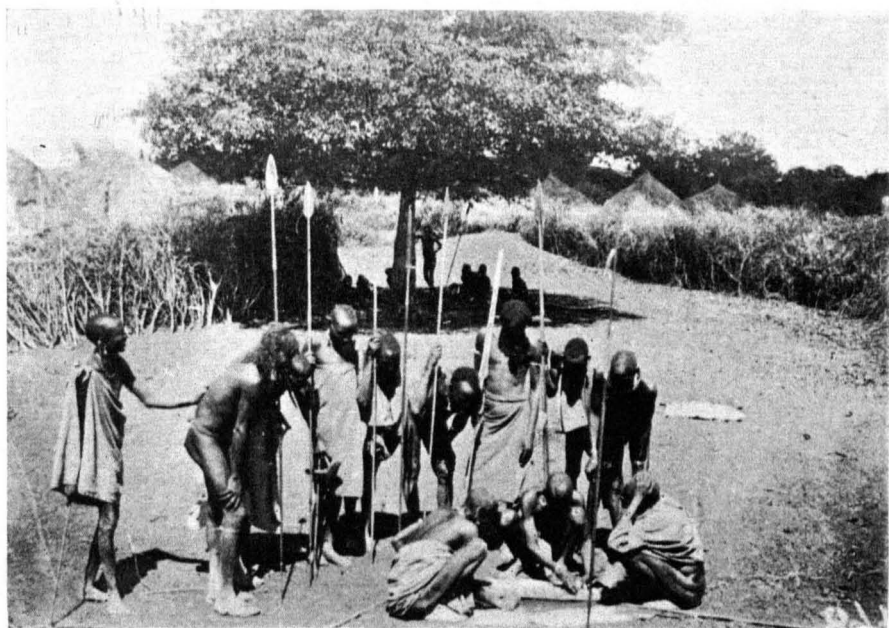
state extends at the present day from the coast of the Red Sea westwards far into the Sahara Desert towards Lake Chad, and is bounded on the north by the southern frontier of Egypt proper, and on the south approximately by the fourth degree of north latitude. The wild ass is therefore found within the northern limits of the Uganda Protectorate. The Masai—themselves no domesticators of wild animals—obtained it from the Nilotic races, and they from the Hamites, further north. In all probability this ass was never domesticated by any Negro form of man, but by the Hamites—tribes related to the Galla, the Somali, and the ancient Egyptian. The Masai, however, received it as a domestic animal, and carried it in their wanderings far south into Unyamwezi, and eastwards towards the Zanzibar coast. In Unyamwezi the African donkey found another home, and spread from there towards Nyasaland. From this form (of course, by way of Egypt) the domestic asses of the world are mainly derived, though it is possible that in Western Asia there may have been some infusion of the blood of the wild asses of that region. The Masai use this donkey for carrying their effects when they move about from kraal to kraal.

Dogs are not much in evidence now in the Masai kraals. Although they are supposed to assist in warning the Masai of the approach of wild beasts, they are of little use in that respect, as, like most of the prick-eared curs in Negro Africa, they cannot bark, but only make a desolate howling not easily distinguished from the noise of the jackals outside.

The *food* of the pastoral Masai varies according to the sex and status of the individual. Women and old men obtain by barter flour and perhaps beans and green stuff. The young warriors subsist on nothing but milk, blood, and meat. The blood they obtain by regularly bleeding their cattle. The oxen are bled in the following manner: A leather ligature is tied tightly round the throat. Below this bandage an arrow is shot in by a warrior, and the shaft is generally blocked so that the arrow-head cannot penetrate far beyond the vein. The arrow is pulled out and the blood gushes forth. When enough blood has been collected in vessels, the ligature is removed and the orifice of the vein is stopped up by a paste of cow-dung and dust. The frothing blood is greedily drunk,* and is the only way in which the Masai warrior obtains the salt necessary to his well-being. Cows' blood is often thought to be (and no doubt is) a cure for dysentery. Masai warriors may eat the flesh of oxen, sheep, goats, or eland. This meat is usually boiled in an earthenware pot, and sometimes

* Men who are not poor in cattle and supplies of milk generally mix sour or sweet milk with the blood and drink the two together. I was informed that only poor men drink the unmixed blood, but I have frequently seen the young warriors, whether poor or rich, bleeding the cattle, and immediately afterwards draining calabashes full of frothing blood hot from the animal's body.

medicine derived from herbs is mixed with it. The Masai women and old married men eat pretty much what they like, and are allowed to smoke tobacco; but during pregnancy the women rarely touch meat, consuming at that time enormous quantities of butter and milk. They also, when in this condition, eat fat, and believe that these oily substances will lubricate the passages and make delivery easier. Honey is eaten by every one who can get it. By mixing a little water with the honey an intoxicating mead is made, which is much drunk by the old men.



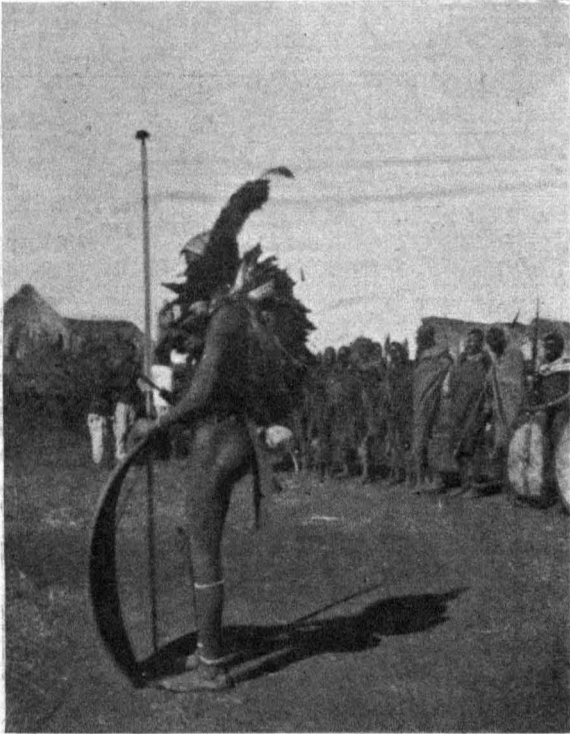
456. SPEARS OF MASAI WARRIORS. (SOME OF THE MEN ARE PLAYING THE GAME OF DRAUGHTS, ILLUSTRATED ON P. 795)

The foregoing remarks about food apply mainly to the pastoral Masai; the agricultural section does not hold quite so rigidly to its special observances for the food of the young men as distinguished from that of the elders or the women; and as these people are industrious agriculturists and rear large crops of grain, pumpkins, and beans, their diet is largely of vegetable substances, though they are as fond of meat as their pastoral kinsmen and enemies.

Among the pastoral Masai only the women and the married men are allowed to smoke *tobacco*. Some of the elder men take tobacco mixed with potash as snuff.

The *weapons* of the Masai consist of spears and shields, bows and

arrows, knobkerries, and swords from a foot to eighteen inches long. The swords, which are of a peculiar shape, like long and slender leaves—very narrow towards the hilt or handle, and at their broadest close to the tip—are called “sime,” and are of widespread use throughout North-Eastern Africa, where the tribes are of the same stock or have come under the influence of the Nilotic and Masai peoples. The spear varies in shape and size. There is a very short, broad-bladed type, which is



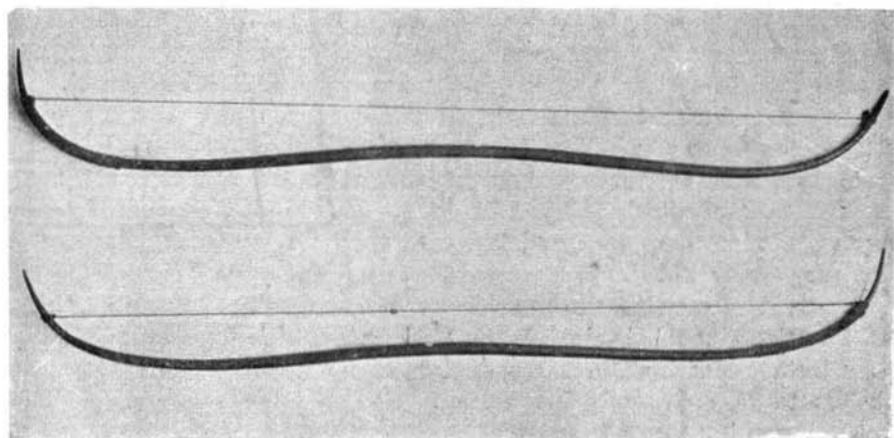
457. A MASAI WARRIOR WITH LONG SPEAR

generally carried by the youths. The warriors among the Masai in the Rift Valley and elsewhere in the Uganda Protectorate and the adjoining parts of British East Africa carry a spear with an extremely long and narrow blade. The head may be fully three feet long. When it is not carried for use, the tip of the blade is generally provided with a small cap ornamented with a tuft of black feathers. The sword is worn usually girt over the right thigh in a scabbard of leather. The knobkerry is generally twisted into the same leather belt worn round the abdomen. Bows and arrows are more in use

by the agricultural Masai; amongst the pastoral people they are relegated to the boys, who use a smaller bow and arrow for shooting birds. The Masai shield is very nearly an oval. It is made of ox hide or the skin of the buffalo. A piece of wood like the hooping of a cask, about an inch wide, is sewn very tightly round the edge of the oval piece of leather, while down the centre of the inside of the shield runs a broad lath of wood. This in the middle is detached from the concave surface, leaving a hollow between, through which the hand of the warrior can be passed. Nearly all Masai shields are painted; perhaps in the case of

some of the agricultural Masai the leather surface is left uncovered with colour. The colours used in painting these shields are red and white (made from ferruginous clay and kaolin), and black (charcoal), and sometimes blue or yellowish brown, the source of these pigments being unknown to me.* The designs on the shields are most varied, and each clan or tribal division has its own.

So many of the Masai having died through civil wars and the results of the cattle plague, some of these tribes or clans have dwindled to a few scattered individuals. Among such a people as the Gwas' Ngishu Masai, who, though still agriculturists, are to the full as brave and warlike as their pastoral kinsmen, very diverse patterns of shield decoration may be met with in the same company of warriors, the result, no doubt, of refugees from



458. BOWS OF GWAS' NGISHU MASAI

extinguished clans having joined them from time to time. The designs on the shields of the Eastern Masai are well illustrated in Mr. Hinde's book, "The Last of the Masai." Some of these designs are also found within the Rift Valley. Others may be seen in my photographs. This type of Masai shield, with the bold designs in black, white, and red, extends to the south-east coast of the Victoria Nyanza (in common with other Masai weapons), among the Shashi people, who, though a Bantu tribe speaking a language related to Kinyamwezi, have nevertheless adopted many Masai customs. The remarkable similarity also between the shields of the Zulu and the Masai has frequently attracted the attention of writers on Africa. The resemblance also extends to head-dresses and the leg ornaments of white hair. It is possible that the Zulu

* Probably clays and ashes.

tribe, which was of Central African origin, may have been at some period of its migration in contact with the Masai, and have copied some of the customs of that race, from which it differs absolutely in language.

The political restraint of British and German authority has practically put an end to the raids of the Masai on the Bantu and Nandi negroes, and has almost extinguished civil war amongst the Masai tribes; therefore, unless they go to war as the auxiliaries of the Europeans (and of late they have been more useful to the Uganda Administration as irregular troops), the modern Masai have little chance of fighting. In former days, before the Masai warriors, called "El Mórran,"* started on an expedition, they would fortify their courage with a war medicine, which was said to be the bark of *Acacia verrugosa*. This bark, when chewed, would make them either frantic or stupefied, thus lulling any apprehensions. Once on the war-path, however, they were invariably brave, as public opinion would probably visit any sign of cowardice with execution. The Masai warriors would travel as much as fifty miles a day at a constant trot. In old days they thought nothing of going 300 miles—even 500 miles—to attack a people or a district which was supposed to be rich in cattle. They would sometimes travel at night as well as in the daytime, but their favourite time of attack was just at dawn. In the first ardour of battle they would slay every man and boy with their huge spears, but women were very rarely killed. It is stated that the Ma-sai have generally been in the habit of warning their enemies before making an attack on them, but I certainly remember myself in 1884 having reported to me a great many instances of the Masai round Kilimanjaro taking or attempting to take Bantu villages wholly by surprise. No doubt in the case of tributary people a warning would be sent first that the overdue tribute must be paid up, and in the event of this notice remaining unheeded the warriors would descend on the rebellious vassal.

The *condition of women* among the Masai offers another curious analogy to the Zulus. It is a condition which is not by any means peculiar to the Masai, as was thought by earlier travellers, but is frequently met with in other negro races showing no near kinship to this people. The Masai warrior is not allowed by the elders of his tribe to marry until he has reached about thirty years of age, and has accumulated a fair amount of property, or else has so distinguished himself by his bravery as to merit an early retirement. But from the time of his reaching puberty till the date at which he is able to marry he is by no means willing to live without the solace of female companionship. The young warrior, soon after attaining manhood (when the hair of his head, from having been previously close shaven, is now allowed to grow until it can be

* In the singular "Ol Morani."



459. WARRIORS OF THE GWAS' NGISHU MASAI

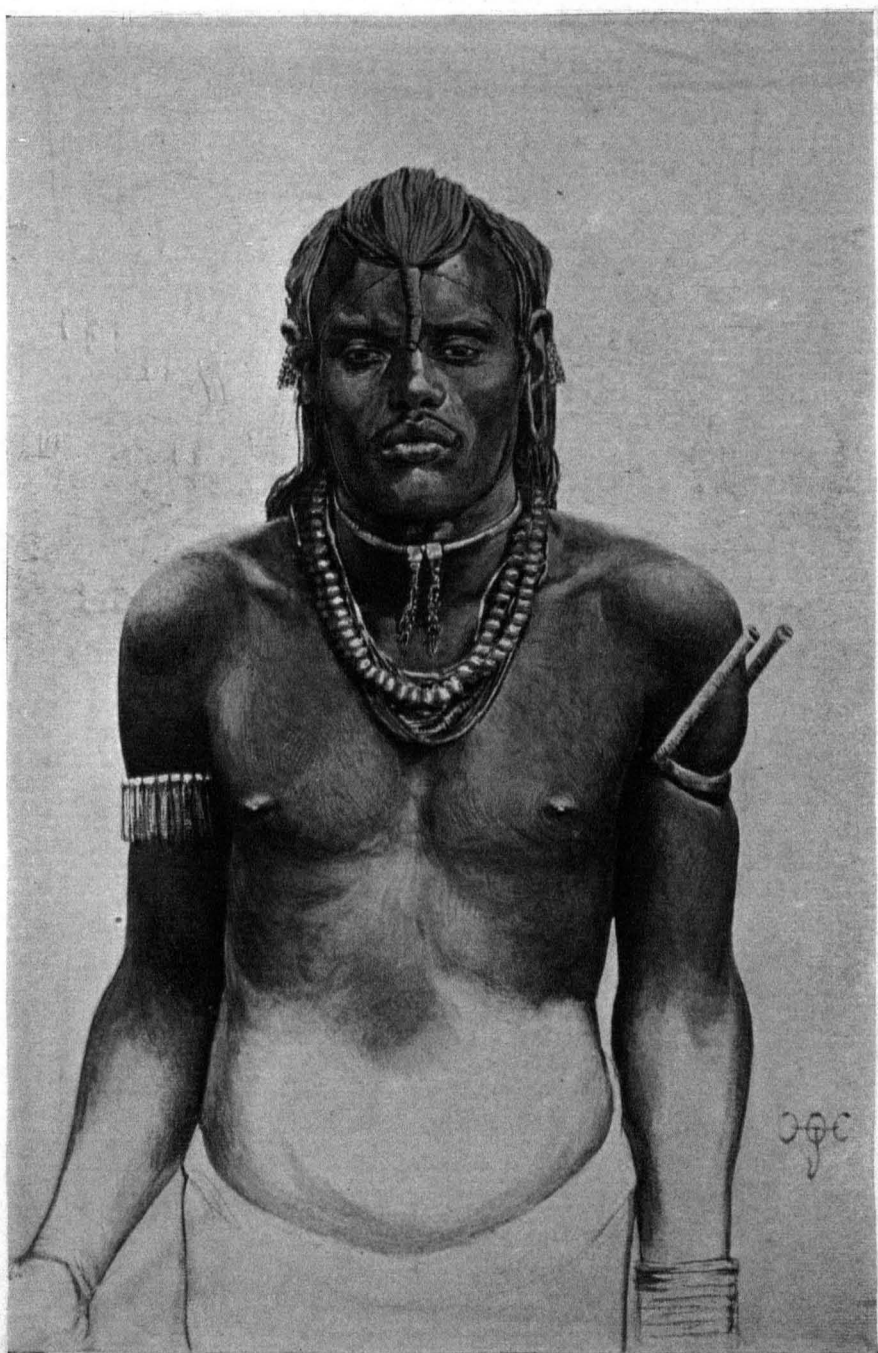
trained into pigtails), goes round the villages of the married people and selects one or two little girls of from eight to thirteen years old. To the mothers of the chosen damsels he makes numerous small presents, but



460. MASAI SHIELDS

does not give cattle or sheep, these being reserved for the marriage gift. The mother raises little or no objection to his proposition if the girls like him, and he then carries off one, two, or it may be three, to the warriors' village or settlement. Here the young people indulge in sexual intercourse, which is considered in no way to be immoral, because the girls are under age, and therefore cannot conceive. When the girl is nearing womanhood, she leaves the warrior and goes back to her mother, and soon after the first menstruation the *clitoris* is excised, and the girl becomes a marriageable woman who must live morally henceforward. If by chance a girl remains with a warrior and conceives by him, no undue fuss is made, though he may probably have to support the child, and may make up his mind eventually to marry the girl. If, likewise, whilst the girl remains unmarried she has intercourse with any man and bears an illegitimate child, she does not incur much censure, and the matter is either settled by her marrying her seducer, or by the intended husband condoning the lapse, and taking over the child with the woman when he finally marries her.

The young girls who live in the warriors' settlements have as agreeable a time of it as can be provided in Masai society. They are supplied with food; the mothers of the young men do all the cooking, and the girls



A MASAI WARRIOR.



themselves spend their time in dancing, singing, adorning themselves, and making love.

After a woman is married—that is to say, is regularly bought by her husband—she is supposed to remain faithful to him, though it is not at all infrequent that a Masai may sanction her going with any man, especially if he be a friend or a guest. If unfaithful without permission, she might in old times have been clubbed to death, but as a general rule a breach of the marriage covenant is atoned for by a payment on the part of the adulterer. One way and another, by custom and by disposition, it must, I think, be stated that the Masai women are very immoral.

Marriage is simply the selection of a likely girl by a retiring warrior, and the handing over to her father of a number of cows, bullocks, goats, sheep, and small additional gifts of honey, goat skins, and perhaps iron wire. After a girl is married she may not return to her father's village unless accompanied by her husband.

Nearly every old woman is a midwife, and husbands do not attend



461. MASAI WARRIORS

the deliveries of their wives unless there is some serious complication which threatens danger to life, when, in addition to the husband, a medicine man may be called in. About a year after the child is *born*

it is given a *name*. (During its infancy, if no name was given, the mother called it by the name of its father's father.) This individual appellation, which is conferred on it with some ceremony, may possibly be the name of the father, or it may be a name which has no direct associations with any relation. If the child is its mother's firstborn she also takes its new name for her own. A goat and a cow are killed on this occasion, at which are present most of the relations, and the flesh is cooked and eaten by the family party. The undigested food from the intestines of these animals is made up into "medicine," and a little of this is put into the child's mouth. From that time forward until the next name-change takes place both child and mother are called by this new name. If the eldest child should die, the mother retains its name until she gives birth to another child, and, in like manner, a year after the birth of this next child, she assumes the name which is given to it at the family gathering. When a girl child is born, she is given her mother's name, which she retains until her marriage; then she is renamed by her husband; and ever afterwards it is considered to entail on her bad luck if she is addressed by the name of her girlhood. Of course, as soon as she is a mother she again changes her name to that which is bestowed on her eldest child a year after its birth; while, if she remains childless after some years of marriage, she assumes once more the mother's name which she bore as a child. Boys retain the names given to them a year after birth all through their warriorhood, but change them when they marry. After this change of name it is likewise considered, in their case, a most unpropitious and unfriendly thing to do to address them by the name they bore in their bachelor days.

A dead man is never referred to by name, if possible. It is considered so unlucky to do this that the action is equivalent to an intentional desire to bring harm on the relatives of the deceased. If any reference must be made to a dead person, it is generally by means of a roundabout description, or by such terms as "my brother," "my father," "my uncle," "my sister." Husbands and wives may with less disastrous consequences refer to their dead partners by name, though even this is done in a whisper and with reluctance. Amongst the living there is a very intricate ceremony on the subject of addressing by name, and a Masai of good manners would feel quite at home in the British House of Commons, where much the same prejudice prevails. If you wish to get at the real name borne by a Masai man, it is advisable to ask one of his friends standing by, who, in reply, will probably give you the name of the man's mother, if he be an eldest son and unmarried, for in such case it must be identical with the man's own name. It is

not considered unlucky if a person in speaking to you mentions your name in your presence; it is the employment of the name in direct address which is thought to bring ill luck. Any one who is asked abruptly for his name probably gives that of his father, which may, of course, also be his. A child would never address his father or mother by name, but would call them "father" or "mother." A married man would also not call to his father- and mother-in-law by their names, but would address them by an honorific title; a woman would simply call her husband's parents "father" and "mother." Boys may address other boys and young girls by their names; but they must speak to all the warriors as "El Mórran," married or old woman as "Koko," and old married men as "Baba." Women generally address old or married men of any importance as "Ol Baiyan" ("Elder"). A married man would probably call out to a woman, not by name, but address her as "Eñ gitok" ("Woman"). If a Masai bears the same name as a member of his tribe who dies, he may change his own name to avoid ill luck.

Little boys among the Masai are soon put to work at herding cattle and making themselves generally useful. They are lean, lank little shrimps at this stage, and receive a large share of cuffs and kicks, and not over much food. Young boys are classed as "Laiok" (singular, "Laioni"). After circumcision, and before they become warriors, the youths are "El Manūa," and sometimes "Selogunya," or "shaven head." As a rule the *circumcision* of the boys takes place in numbers at a time. Boys and youths between the ages of eight and fifteen may be operated on. The elders of a district decide from time to time when a circumcision ceremony is to take place. When a sufficient number of boys have been gathered together, songs are sung, and there is a good deal of feasting, the old men drinking much fermented mead, and often becoming very drunk. For at least a month before the circumcision takes place the boys have been out in the wilderness collecting honey, or purchasing it from the mountain tribes. From the honey collected they have made mead with the assistance of their mothers for the old men to drink during the festivities. The operation of circumcision is generally performed by skilled Andorobo, who are paid a goat each for their work. Each youth that is circumcised must produce an ox (which, of course, will be given to him by his father, or nearest male relative if his father is dead). The flesh of the oxen is the foundation of the feasts which accompany the ceremony. After circumcision the boys remain shut up in their mother's houses for four days, during which time they eat nothing but fat and drink milk. They carefully shave their heads when going back into the world.

The Masai, agricultural and pastoral, deal with their *dead* in a very

summary manner. Unless the dead person is a male and a chief, the corpse is simply carried to a short distance from the village, and left on the ground to be devoured by hyænas, jackals, and vultures. The constant presence of hyænas and the small *Neophron* and *Necrosyrtes*, and the large *Otogyps* vultures round the Masai kraals is encouraged by this practice, and the Masai never actively interfere with these scavengers, unless a hyæna should attempt—as they sometimes do—to enter a village and carry off live-stock or children. Important chiefs, however, are buried, and a year after the burial the eldest son or the appointed successor of the chief carefully removes the skull of the deceased, making at the same time a sacrifice and a libation with the blood of a goat, some milk, and some honey. The skull is then carefully secreted by the son, whose possession of it is understood to confirm him in power, and to impart to him some of the wisdom of his predecessor. In several parts of the Rift Valley cairns of stones meet the eye. They mark the burial-places of dead chiefs, though there is probably no supreme chief of the Masai race buried in that direction.

Women are unable to *inherit property*. The property would be held for them by their sons or brothers under special circumstances. After the death of a Masai father his clothing and adornments are generally destroyed, and his weapons are given to his sons, or are sold. His eldest son inherits all his property in cattle, sheep, and goats, and it rests with him henceforth to support his mother and his step-mothers, and to look after his brothers and sisters.

As regards the *diseases* from which the Masai suffer, Dr. Bödeker, a Government medical officer who has lived for some years amongst the Masai of the Uganda Protectorate, sends me the following particulars: Malarial fever is rarely met with amongst the Masai in the countries to which they are indigenious. These countries lie for the most part on the healthier plateaux of East Africa. But if a Masai leaves this relatively dry grass-land either for the lower levels nearer the Indian Ocean or for the rich forest-lands of Uganda, he is almost as liable to malarial fever as a European. In the same way cases of blackwater fever amongst the Masai may occur when these people enter the forest regions of Central Africa. It is stated that the Masai cure themselves of malarial fever in their own country by a decoction of cassia bark. They drink, at any rate, an astringent potion made from the bark of some tree which belongs to the great leguminous order. They are most subject to smallpox. This terrible scourge, which does not seem to have been known to the Masai until about 1850 (or sixty years ago), has repeatedly swept through their country, carrying off hundreds, even thousands, at a time. In 1892 one of the worst of the epidemics of smallpox occurred, and Dr. Bödeker states

that at Nairobi alone there were over 2,000 deaths. About this period a Somali trader explained to the Masai of the Rift Valley and Nairobi the principle of inoculation. Numbers of them voluntarily submitted to this rude prophylactic measure, and went through, as a result, a mild form of smallpox, which, however, in some cases, ended fatally. Since that time, however, the Masai have thronged to the European doctor, wherever there is one, to be vaccinated. I verily believe that but for the advent of the European the pastoral Masai would in a few years have become absolutely extinct between smallpox and the cattle plague which induced famine. Lung diseases are rare, the Masai having been inured from early youth to extremes of heat and cold; but in this case it is rather the survival of the fittest, as there is considerable mortality amongst the children. They suffer much from intestinal worms, chiefly from the *Tenia*, or tape-worm, and the *Ascaris*, or round-worm. Perhaps the malady which troubles them most frequently is chronic ophthalmia. This by neglect leads in time to cataract. The eye disease is spread from one Masai to another by the millions of flies that follow the Masai wherever they go, attracted by the cattle. As in Egypt, so in Masailand, it is no uncommon sight to see the eyes of children bunged up, with flies feeding on the moisture, the child making little or no attempt to get rid of the pests. They suffer much from sloughing ulcers (*Phagedema*) and from eczema, which is often due to the swarms of head-lice. Dyspepsia and dysentery are rarely met with under normal conditions. Venereal diseases were unknown amongst them until the Swahili traders and porters came on the scene, and even yet, in spite of the immorality of their women, they are not seriously affected with syphilis, as is the case with the Bantu tribes further inland. It should, however, be mentioned here that another cause of the stationary or decreasing condition of the Masai population seems to lie in an increasing reluctance on the part of the men to settle down in the married state and beget children. The women, stung by this indifference, drift away in increasing numbers to the trading camps of the Swahilis or the Indian coolies on the Uganda Railway. It is said also that, like the Baganda women, the Masai females are becoming increasingly sterile.

As regards remedies, the Masai possess several therapeutical and empirical remedies. Of the last description are the small pieces of metal, wood, or unclassified rubbish sewn up in skin bags, which are given to them by the "Laibon," or priest-doctor, and are worn round the neck on a chain or wire. They are, however, acquainted with roots, bark, leaves, and sap of curative properties—astringents, laxatives, tonics, sudatories, and excitants. These drugs are sometimes taken in milk, or are mixed with the food (meat) which is being stewed or boiled.

With regard to surgery, they are able in a rough-and-ready fashion to

deal with the cure of wounds, the arresting of hæmorrhage, and the mending of broken bones. When a large wound has been inflicted, the two sides are brought together by means of the long, white thorns of the acacia, which are passed through the lips of the wound like needles. A strip of fibre or bass is then wound round the exposed points of the thorns on each side of the wound, just as a boot might be laced up. Hæmorrhage is arrested in the same way, or by ligatures, or pressing on to the severed vein a poultice of cow-dung and dust. A fractured limb is straightened as far as possible so that the broken ends of the bone may come together, and is then tightly bandaged with long strips of hide. When they are absolutely obliged to amputate a limb a tight ligature is tied just above the line of amputation. The limb is then placed on a hard, smooth log, and is deftly chopped off by the stroke of a sharp Masai sword. Before the advent of the European the Masai would apply butter to the stump to assist healing; but now they have such a belief in that nauseous-smelling drug, iodoform, that they will send considerable distances to a European doctor to obtain it for curing their wounds and ulcers.

The medicine men of the Masai are not infrequently their chiefs. The supreme chief of the whole race is almost invariably a powerful "medicine man." These "Laibon"* (as they are called) are priests as well as doctors. They are skilled in the interpretation of omens, in the averting of ill luck, the bringing of rain, and the interpretation of dreams.

The Masai have very little *religion*. They believe in a vague power of the sky, whose name simply means "sky" ("Aṅgai"†). Sometimes this word is equally used to indicate rain, though there is also a special word for the water descending from the sky ("Attashá"). The sky god is sometimes invoked when a severe drought threatens ruin to the pastures. On such an occasion as this the chief of the district will summon the children of all the surrounding villages. They come in the evening, just after sunset, and stand in a circle, each child holding a bunch of grass. Their mothers, who come with them, also hold grass in their hands. The children then commence a long chant.

Some of the Masai hold that at the time when their race began there were four deities ruling the world. One was black, and full of kindness towards humanity; another was white, but held himself more aloof—was, in fact, the god or goddess‡ of the Great Firmament. Then there was

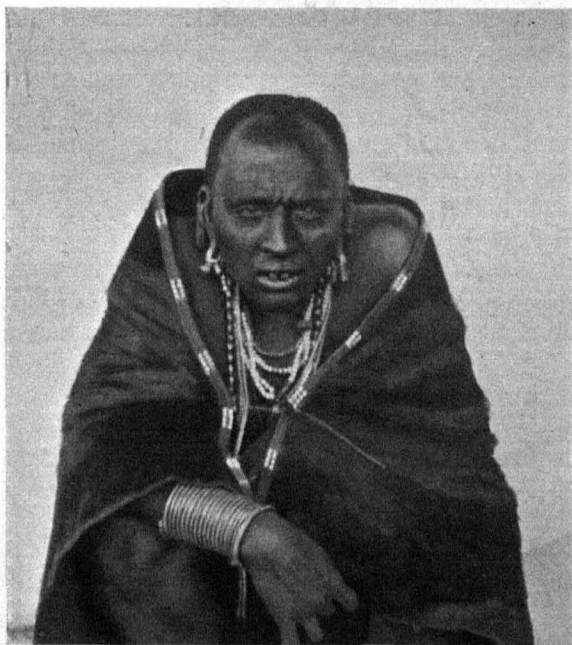
* The word really is in the singular *Ol-aibon*; in the plural, *El-aibon*.

† Sometimes pronounced "Ṃgai." It is difficult to say whether the root is "Ṃgai" or "Gai," with the feminine article "Eñ-" or "Añ-."

‡ For "Ṃgai" may be a word with a feminine significance.

a grey god, who was wholly indifferent to the welfare of humanity; and a red god, who was thoroughly bad. The black god was very human in his attributes—and, in fact, was nothing but a glorified man, and the ancestor of the Masai. They generally imagine that the black god originally lived on the snowy summit of Mount Kenya, where the other gods, pitying his loneliness, sent him a small boy as a companion. When the boy grew up, he and the black god took to themselves wives from amongst the surrounding Negro races, and so procreated the first Masai men. Afterwards,

the grey and the red gods became angry at the increase of people on the earth, and punished the world with a terrible drought and scorching heat. The child-companion of the black god, who had grown up into a man and was already the father of several Masai children, started off for the sky to remonstrate with the deities. A few days afterwards he returned, bringing copious rain with him, and remained henceforth on earth till his own death at a ripe age. This child is supposed to have been the principal ancestor of the



462. MASAI CHIEF AND MEDICINE MAN (THE LATE TERERE)

Masai people, while his god-companion, the black deity, was the founder of the royal house of the Sigirari tribe—represented at the present day by two great chiefs, Lenana and Sendeyo, half-brothers, one of whom lives on British territory near Nairobi, and the other within German East Africa. After the child had brought rain to the earth, the grey and the red gods quarrelled with each other, and were killed. The black god also died, after he had founded the reigning family; and now the Masai only acknowledge the existence of one deity of supreme power and vague attributes, the white god of the firmament, who often shows himself strangely indifferent to the needs of humanity.

The Masai do not believe in a *future life* for women or common people. Only chiefs and *influential* head-men possess any life beyond the grave. It is thought that some of their more notable ancestors return to earth in the shape of snakes—either pythons or cobras. The tribal snakes of the Masai must be black because they themselves are dark skinned. They believe that white snakes look after the welfare of Europeans. These snakes certainly live in a half-tamed state in the vicinity of large Masai villages, generally in holes or crevices. They are supposed never to bite a member of the clan which they protect; but they are ready to kill the enemies of that clan and their cattle. When a Masai marries, his wife has to be introduced to the tutelary snake of the clan and rigorously ordered to recognise it and never to harm it. Even the children are taught to respect these reptiles. These snakes sometimes take up their abode near water-holes, which, it is supposed, they will defend against unlawful use on the part of strangers. The fetish snake is often consulted by people in perplexity, though what replies it is able to give must be left to the imagination. The snakes are, however, really regarded with implicit belief as being the form in which renowned ancestors have returned to this mundane existence.

The Masai also have a vague worship of trees, and regard grass as a sacred symbol. When wishing to make peace or to deprecate the hostility of man or god, a Masai plucks and holds in his hand wisps of grass, or, in default of grass, green leaves. The trees they particularly reverence are the "subugo," the bark of which has medical properties, and a species of parasitic fig, which they call the "retete." These figs begin as a small seedling with a slender, whitish stem growing at the roots of some tall tree—a *Khaya*, *Vitex*, or *Trachylobium*. Or the fig seedling may develop from a crack high up in the tree-trunk from which it is to grow as a parasite. Little by little the fig swells and grows, and throws out long, snaky, whitish roots and branches, until by degrees it has enveloped the whole of the main trunk of its victim in glistening coils of glabrous root and branch. Gradually these enveloping tentacles meet and coalesce, until at last the whole of the trunk of the original tree is covered from sight and absorbed by the now massive fig-tree, the branches of which radiate in all directions, and sometimes in their loops and contorted forms come quite close to the ground. The green figs, which grow straight out of the trunk, are sometimes eaten by the boys and girls of the Masai, and their seniors propitiate the tree by killing a goat, bringing blood in a calabash, and pouring it out over the base of the tree-trunk, about the branches of which also they will strew grass. Grass and leaves, in fact, occupy a prominent place in the Masai category of sacred things. I have already mentioned that when peace or peaceful measures are to be

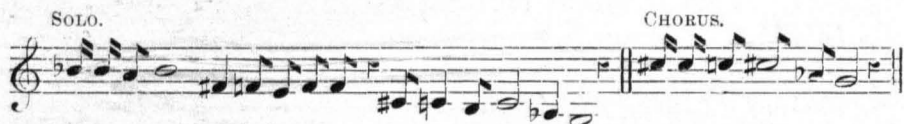
indicated it is customary to hold grass or leaves in one's right hand. Grass is often laid between the forks of trees as a party of warriors proceeds on an expedition, and grass is thrown after the warriors by their sweethearts. The sorcerers and "Laibonok," or priests, precede nearly every mystic action by the plucking of grass.

Another *superstitious custom* to which the Masai formerly attached much importance was the act of spitting. In marked contradistinction to the prejudice against expectoration as a polite custom in European societies, not only amongst the Masai, but in the allied Nandi and Sūk peoples, to spit at a person is a very great compliment. The earlier travellers in Masailand were astonished, when making friendship with old Masai chiefs and head-men, to be constantly spat at. When I entered the Uganda Protectorate and met the Masai of the Rift Valley for the first time, every man, before extending his hand to me, would spit on the palm. When they came into my temporary house at Naivasha Fort they would spit to the north, east, south, and west before entering the house. Every unknown object which they regard with reverence, such as a passing train, is spat at. Newly born children are spat on by every one who sees them. They are, of course, being laughed out of the custom now by the Swahilis and Indian coolies and the Europeans; and it must be admitted that, however charming a race the Masai are in many respects, they will lose none of their inherent charm by abandoning a practice which, except in parts of America and Southern Europe, is very justly regarded with disgust.

Dancing among the Masai does not differ markedly from this exercise and ritual in other races of Central Africa. There is the war-dance of the warriors when returning from a successful expedition. This is, of course, a mimic warfare, sometimes most amusing and interesting to the spectator. The men will at times become so excited that the sham fight threatens to degenerate into an angry scuffle. There are dances of a somewhat indelicate nature which precede the circumcision ceremonies of boys and girls, and dances which accompany the formal naming of a child. Barren women, or women who have not succeeded in having children, paint their faces with pipeclay in the most hideous fashion till they look like skulls, arm themselves with long sticks, and dance before a medicine man, or a big chief reputed to be a medicine man, in order that his remedies may result in the longed-for child. These dances are almost invariably accompanied by songs, and, in fact, one word in the Masai language—"os-singolio"—means "song-dance."

As regards *music*, they have no musical instruments except drums. They are very fond of singing, and the voices of the men occasionally are a high and agreeable tenor; but more often, like most Africans, the men

sing in a disagreeable falsetto. The women's voices, though powerful, are extremely shrill—shriller than the highest soprano that ever made me shudder in a European opera-house. It struck me that the Masai women had extraordinary range of compass. They were able to produce very deep contralto notes as easily as an upper C. Singing usually means a chosen songster or songstress yelling a solo at the top of his or her voice, and being accompanied by a chorus of men or maidens, women and men often singing together. The chorus does not usually sing the same air as the soloist, but an anti-strophe. I took down a record on my phonograph of some of these Masai songs. One of these I have attempted to reduce to our notation, and it is as follows:—



The Masai have few *industries*. The smelting and forging of iron is done for them usually by a helot tribe of smiths related to the Andorobo and the Nandi, and generally called the Elgunono. This people not only smelts the iron (which is usually obtained as a rubble of ironstone from the beds of rivers) by means of a clay furnace, heated with wood fuel and worked with the usual African bellows; but beats out the pig iron with hammers into spears, swords, tools, and ornaments. The Masai women make a small amount of earthenware. The agricultural Masai are much more industrious, and employ themselves in all the usual industries of basket-weaving, mat-making, and other simple arts practised by the Bantu Negroes, from whom, no doubt, they have learnt a good deal. The pastoral Masai are greatly indebted to the Bantu and Nandi tribes for their adornments and implements, though they are increasingly dependent on the European, Asiatic, and Swahili traders for many of their requirements in the way of iron and copper wire and beads. They must, in fact, have adopted much of their present style of adornment in relatively recent times, since they became acquainted with the manufactured goods of Europe and Asia.

To the Andorobo they look to provide them with colobus monkey skins and ostrich feathers, and perhaps with ivory.

About 150 years ago, as far as one may reckon by native tradition, the pastoral Masai were well established in the country immediately to the north of Kilimanjaro. The Kikuyu held the (then) forest-clad heights along the eastern escarpment of the Rift Valley, but the Masai thrived and became completely dominant wherever the forest afforded no refuge to their foes. About that time a powerful medicine man arose amongst

them called Kibebete, of the Sigirari tribe. This man brought together under his rule most of the Masai clans of the pastoral section. With the agricultural Masai to the north, between Elgon and Baringo, he had nothing to do, and it was about this time that the enmity between the two divisions of the Masai race began—an enmity which lasted until quite recently, and very nearly resulted in the total extinction of the agricultural section of the race. From Kibebete is descended Lenana, who is the eldest surviving son of the great chief Mbatian. He has a brother,



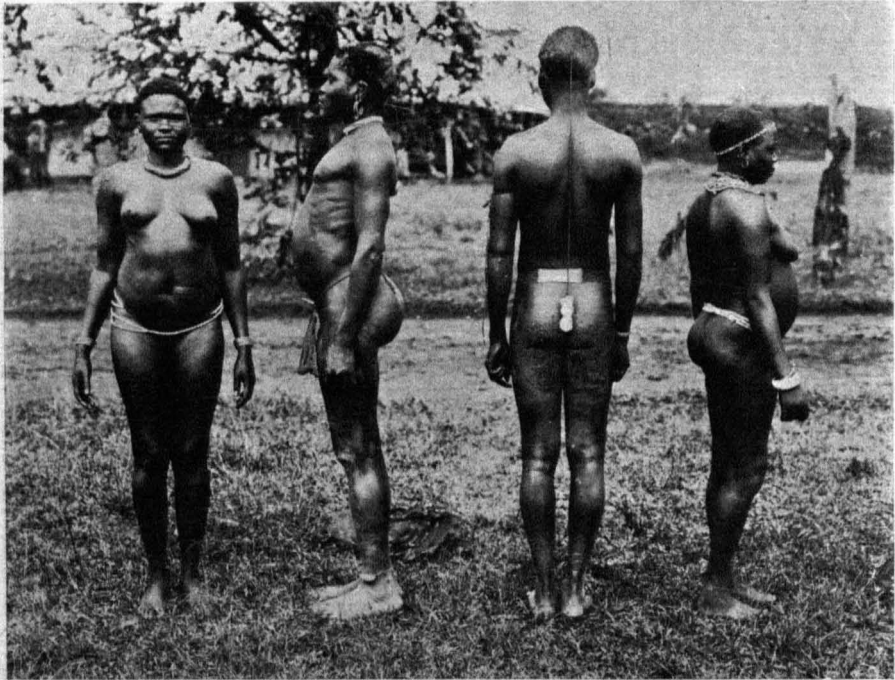
463. A MASAI FORGE AND BLACKSMITH (ENJÁMUSI)

Sendeyo, who has quarrelled with him and set up as supreme chief over the Masai on German territory to the south of the British frontier.

In the mountainous region of Tarangole (which lies to the east of the marshy Bari country, and is part of the long ridge of plateau and mountain which stretches with few interruptions in a north-westerly line from the highlands east of the Victoria Nyanza to the triangle between the Sobat and the White Nile) dwell the *Latuka** people who, it has been already observed, are nearly related to the Masai in language, in physique, and in some of their manners and customs. But the *Latuka*, early in the history

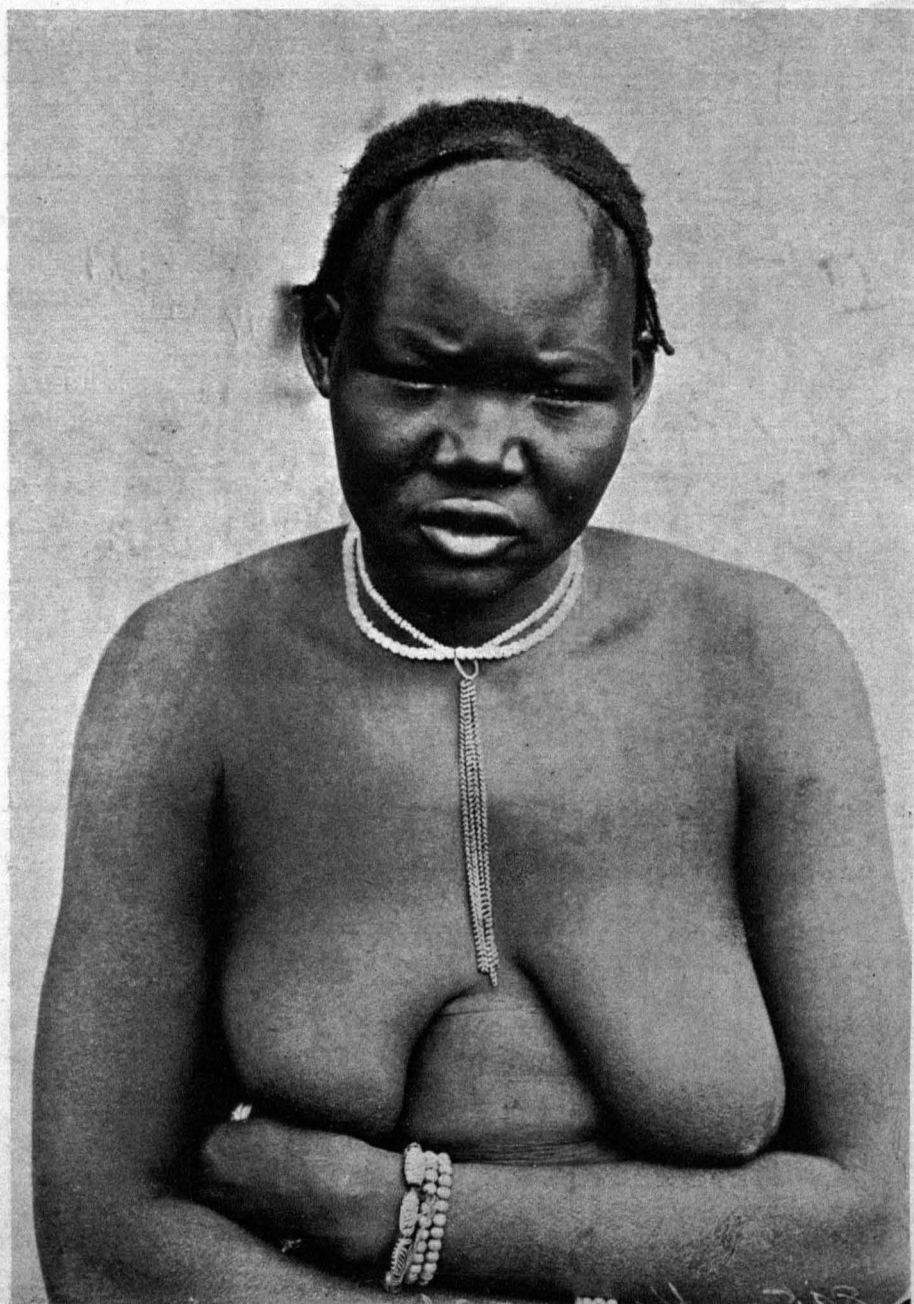
* This is Baker's and Emin Pasha's version of the name, which is possibly El Atūkan (cf. with El Tūkan, or Tūken, the native name of the Kamásia tribe of Nandi).

of the Egyptian Sudan, became somewhat Arabised by the Arabs and Nubians, who, under the protection of Egypt, invaded these regions of the Upper Nile as slave- and ivory-traders some fifty years ago. The country of the Latuka was never formally conquered by Egypt, nor was it overrun by the Dervishes after the Mahdi's revolt. It may be said that during the attenuated life of the Egyptian Administration under Emin Pasha, Latuka preserved an attitude of friendly neutrality, which it continued to the British Administration during and after the mutiny of the Sudanese

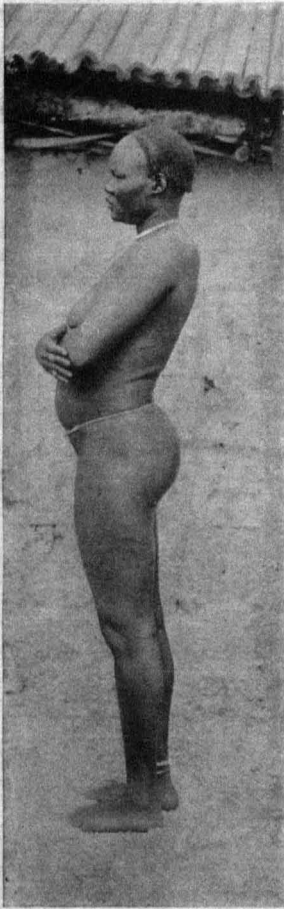


464. KARAMOJO PEOPLE

soldiers. It is a populous country, governed by powerful chiefs, who many of them talk Arabic, and all of whom dress in Arab costume. A number of the Latuka have adopted Islam. This, and their partiality for Arab clothing, has tended to obscure their relationship to the nude and nomad Masai. The fact remains, however, that of all existing languages their dialect approaches nearest to the tongue of the Masai, which is separated from them by many degrees of latitude and longitude. I regret that alone among the important or interesting dialects of the Uganda Protectorate Latuka finds no place in my collected vocabularies. Such knowledge of



465. A KARAMOJO WOMAN



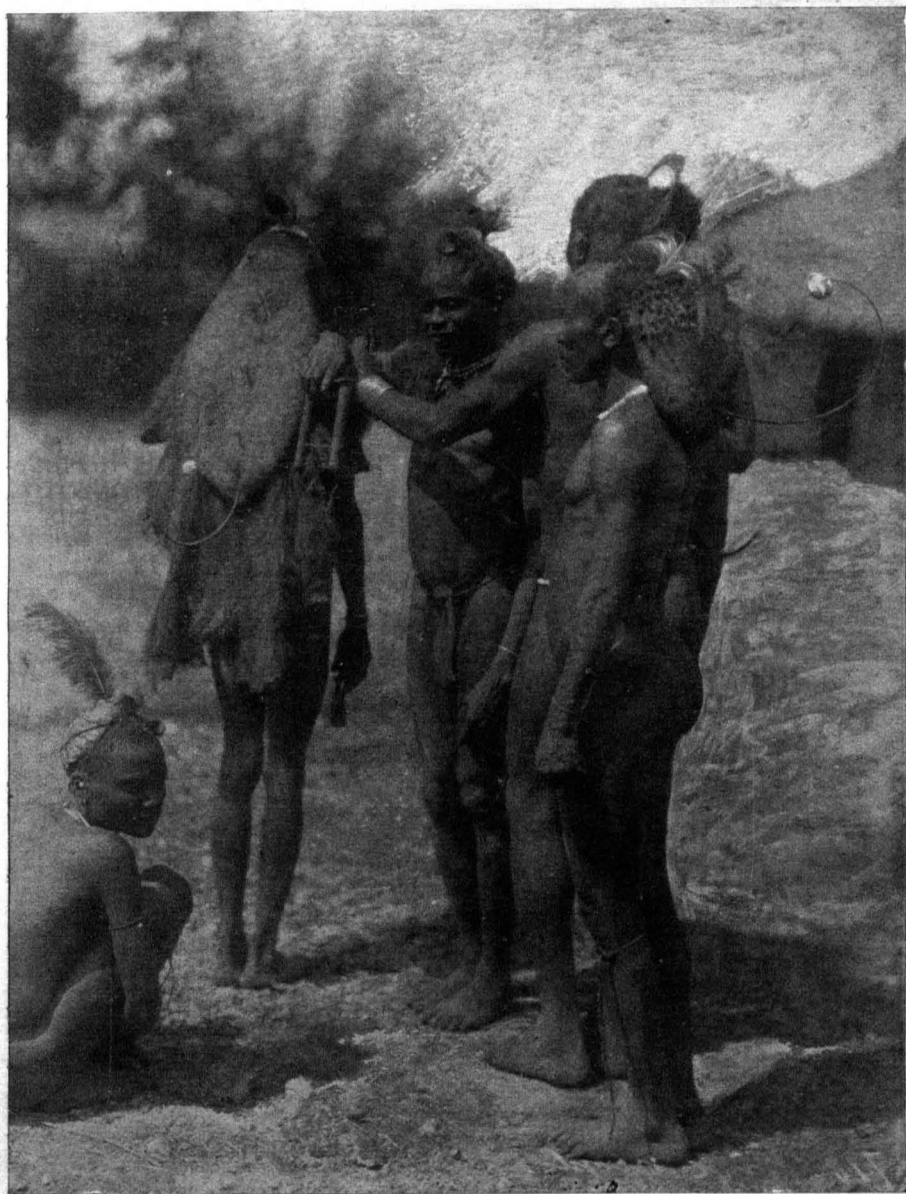
466. A KARAMOJO WOMAN

their language as I possess is derived from Emin Pasha's article on the subject published in the *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Berlin, 1882. The question is such an interesting one that I trust the officials or missionaries of the Uganda Protectorate may make haste to collect vocabularies of Latuka before that language dies out under the rivalry of Sudanese Arabic or of the flourishing Acholi tongues to the south. What would be interesting in this connection would be to ascertain if Latuka were more archaic than Masai, both tongues being derived from a stock which was a blend between the tongues of the Nile Negroes and of the Hamitic Galas. At present, from the little I know, it would seem to me that Masai comes nearer to this original blend than the tongue of Latuka, which is slightly more corrupt. If this be the case, the original birthplace of the Masai may have been farther to the east or north-east than the Latuka.

East of the Latuka country there would seem to be a belt of Nilotic people connecting the Acholi tribes with their allies in race and language, the *Dinka* or *Jañke*.* To the east and south-east, however, of this belt of Acholi people is the *Karamojo*, or Karamoyo, country, which extends north and south from the northern flanks of Mount Elgon nearly to a level with the north end of Lake Rudolf. The Karamojo people physically are closely allied to the Bantu

Negroes, though in their cranial and facial characteristics they betray an ancient intermixture with the Masai. The women, though quite of the Negro type, have sometimes very fine figures, modelled a good deal more according to the conventional ideas of beauty amongst Europeans. They are broad at the hips, and have thick, well-shaped thighs and short, straight legs from the knee to the ankle. The men are very like the good-looking type of Bantu Negro. Sometimes, however, they show traces of Nilotic intermixture by the long, lanky figures, knock knees, and long, thin, splayed legs. They are black of skin. There is a slight tendency

* Jañke, or Dyanke, is the correct form, which the Sudanese Arabs have corrupted to Diñka.



467. TURKANA AND SŪK MEN FROM THE VICINITY OF THE RIBO HILLS AND THE RIVER KERIO



468. A SŪK FROM NEAR LAKE SUGOTA

to prognathism. Like the Nilotic and Masai peoples, they are indifferent to the use of clothes, and the men usually go quite naked, wearing only waist-belts and necklaces. The lobe of the ear is pierced, and so is the upper part of the rim. Two or more brass rings are worn through the lobe (which is not, however, stretched down to the shoulder, as in the Masai), and from one to five smaller brass rings are inserted in the holes pierced through the rim of the outer ear. They do not as a rule affect much decoration of the body by means of cicatrices. Women may occasionally have parallel rows of weals across the upper arm. The women do not shave the head universally, as is done among the Masai and the Sūk. Ordinarily the wool is allowed to grow until it forms a smooth cap of short hair over the top of the head. Among the men this "cap-like" appearance is heightened by plastering the head with a mixture of clay and cow-dung. I have not seen any attempt made to extend the growth of hair into a *chignon* down the back as is done amongst the Sūk and Turkana, and occasionally amongst the Nilotic tribes to the west of Karamojo.

But the Karamojo fasten to a peak in their hair-cap at the back of the head a long string which falls down perpendicularly over the back, lying just between the shoulder blades. The end of this string is decorated with fluffy balls of white feathers, generally

the down of the marabou stork. A hair-cap is often stuck with ostrich plumes, or may be further decorated with a huge pall of black feathers. The Karamojo are industrious agriculturists, and are peaceful people with a love of commerce. They have been often harried in times past by the Turkana on the east, the Nile tribes on the west, and outlying sections of the Nandi on the south. Not much is known about their customs, but they are said to be similar in some respects to those of the Bantu Negroes, of which they evidently form an outlying branch that has accepted from their conquerors of Masai stock an early branch of the Masai language.

To the east of Karamojo, in the somewhat arid countries along the western coast-lands of Lake Rudolf, and thence south-west over high mountains and hot valleys to the north end of Lake Baringo, extends the distribution of the gigantic *Turkana-Sūk* people. The Turkana who dwell to the west of Lake Rudolf are perhaps the tallest race living on the globe's surface. The late Captain Wellby considered that in one district the men presented an average of 7 feet in height. I met with very tall men amongst the Sūk, but I do not think the tallest exceeded 6 feet 6 inches. The colour of the skin in the Sūk-Turkana group is chocolate-brown. In their physiognomy they sometimes recall the Masai very closely, but I have seen one or two examples with a cast of features almost Caucasian. The hair of the head, though abundant, is altogether a Negro's wool. On the whole, perhaps, their *physical characteristics* may, together with their language, support the theory that the Turkana-Sūk group of Negroes are the outcome of a mixture between the Masai stock (which is a blend between the Hamite and the Negro) and the Nilotic peoples such as the Acholi and Dinka.* In their original migration the

* For the better understanding of these shades of definition of the varying blends of the Negro with early Caucasian invaders of the Nile basin, I give the following summary of my views:—

A statement showing approximately the proportions of the early Caucasian element in the negroid or Negro races of East Central Africa.

Name of Race or Stock, and Composition.	Proportion of White (Caucasian) Blood.
HIMA (Hamite, allied to Gala, Somali, etc., Caucasian and original Negro)	$\frac{1}{2}$
MASAI-LATUKA (Hima and Nilotic Negro)	$\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$
SŪK-TURKANA-ELGUMI (Masai and perhaps Gala with Nilotic and Bantu)	$\frac{1}{8}$
NILOTIC (a dash of Hima and Masai with much original Negro and a little Pygmy and Bushman blood)	$\frac{1}{4}$
BANTU (West African Negro mainly, with a little absorption of Congo Pygmy, and, on the east and south, Bushman, blood; powerfully modified by Hima [Hamitic] intermixture in many tribes)	$\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{32}$
WEST AFRICAN NEGRO PYGMY BUSHMAN (HOTTENTOT)	Original Negro stocks None

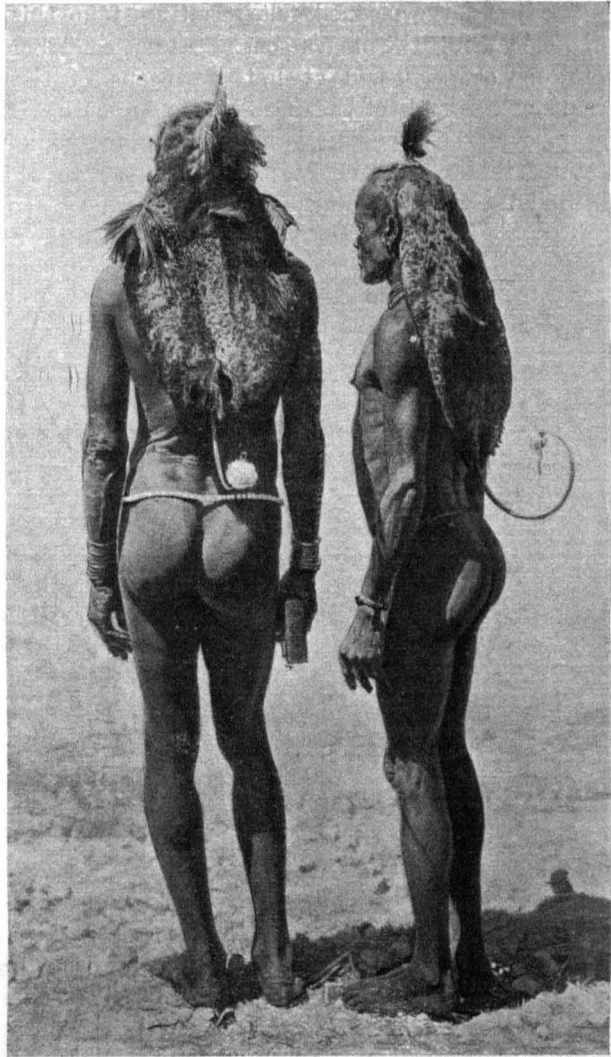


469. A SŪK CHIGNON

Masai may have stayed for some time in the vicinity of Lake Rudolf, have imposed their language (since much changed), and have produced the present gigantic race of Turkana and Sūk by mingling with the antecedent population of Nilotic and Bantu Negroes. It should be noted that, according to native tradition, it is only some fifty years ago since the Burkeneji section of the Masai were driven from the Kerio Valley *west* of Lake Rudolf by the Turkana-Sūk.

The men among the Sūk and Turkana affect absolute nudity, wearing at most a small leather cape over the shoulders. Their women are not much more clothed. As among the Masai, the women shave the head, but the men, on the contrary, cultivate the *hair of the head* into enormous *chignons*.

They begin as youths by straining their woolly locks as far as they can pull them out from the surface of the skull. They rub them with grease, clay, and cow-dung, to straighten the hair and stiffen it into a kind of felt. This stiffening of fat, clay, and cow-dung thickly coats the outer surface of the hair bag as it hangs down over the neck. When a man dies, all the hair is carefully cut off his head. It is

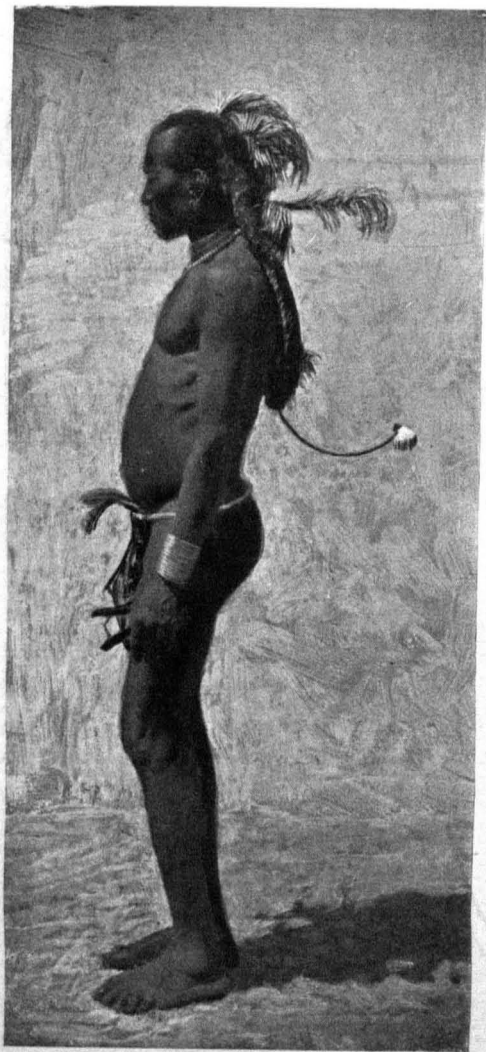


470. TWO TALL SŪK ELDERS

washed, and the cleaned felt resulting from this process is cut up and divided among the man's sons. These contributions are woven into the growing *chignon*, and at last by means of these additions and by the continued growth of the head-hair a huge bag is formed, which hangs low down over the shoulders, reaching even to the loins. The hair *chignon* is trained into a kind of bag, the opening to which is at the back, just behind the nape of the neck. In this huge bag of felted hair (coated

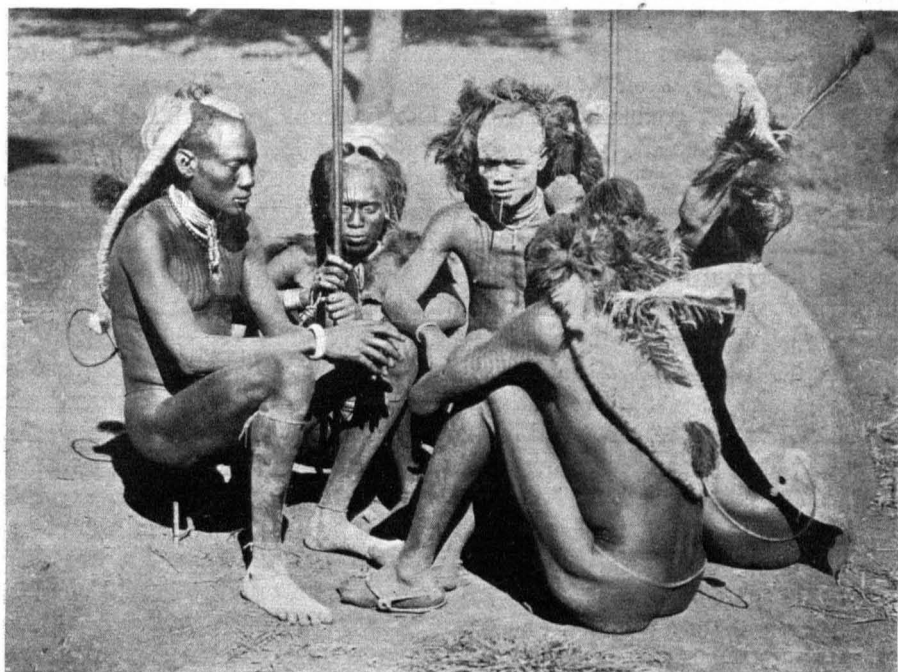
with a paste of whitish clay) are kept the few necessities of life or treasures of the Sūk man. Herein he puts away and carries about his fire-stick and drill, his snuff, or a few beads. The outer surface of the bag and the hair on the top of the head are decorated with ostrich feathers, sometimes in wild profusion. Occasionally the white feathers of the ostrich are dyed yellow or red by some process. Like the Masai, the men seldom travel without sandals of ox hide.

Among the Turkana the outer *rim* of the *ear-conch* is *pierced* from the top of the ear down to the lobe with sometimes eight holes, or as few as two. Through these holes in the rim of the ear are inserted brass or iron rings. Coils of iron wire are generally worn round the neck. The wire is very thick, and compels the wearer to hold his head stiffly. In the Karamojo and some of the Sūk people the *under-lip* is *pierced*, and into this hole is inserted either a bird's or a porcupine's quill, or a long, sharp tooth of some beast, or a curved rod of brass. The septum of the nose is pierced in both men and women amongst



471. A SŪK CHIEF FROM NORTH OF BARINGO

the Sūk, and through the hole is inserted a brass ring, to which is fixed, close up to the nose, a flat disc of brass about the size of a florin. Iron wire is made into rings, which are worn on the upper arm, just under



472. A GROUP OF SŪK (SHOWING TATTOOING ON ARMS)

the deltoid muscle. Sometimes the Turkana wear on the right wrist a curious circular or semi-circular knife. This is a thin blade of steel with a sharp edge on the outer side, but a blunt one on the side nearest the body. It has a shape something like a very thick crescent or quoit. This arm-knife is found frequently amongst the tribes at the north end of Lake Rudolf. The Turkana warriors wear another curious adornment on the right arm. It is a band of plaited leather from which hangs a long string of the same substance, at the end of which the long white hair of a cow's tail, or of the colobus monkey, is fastened in a tassel. Or the armband may be of leather with long pendants of chains. Festoons of chains or of leather may also be fixed to the leg below the knee. The men sometimes wear a curious *waist-belt* of leather, which over the buttocks has a breadth of six inches and decreases round the abdomen to three. The edge of this *leather girdle* of goat skin is sewn with small beads, generally made of brass. The iron and steel of which

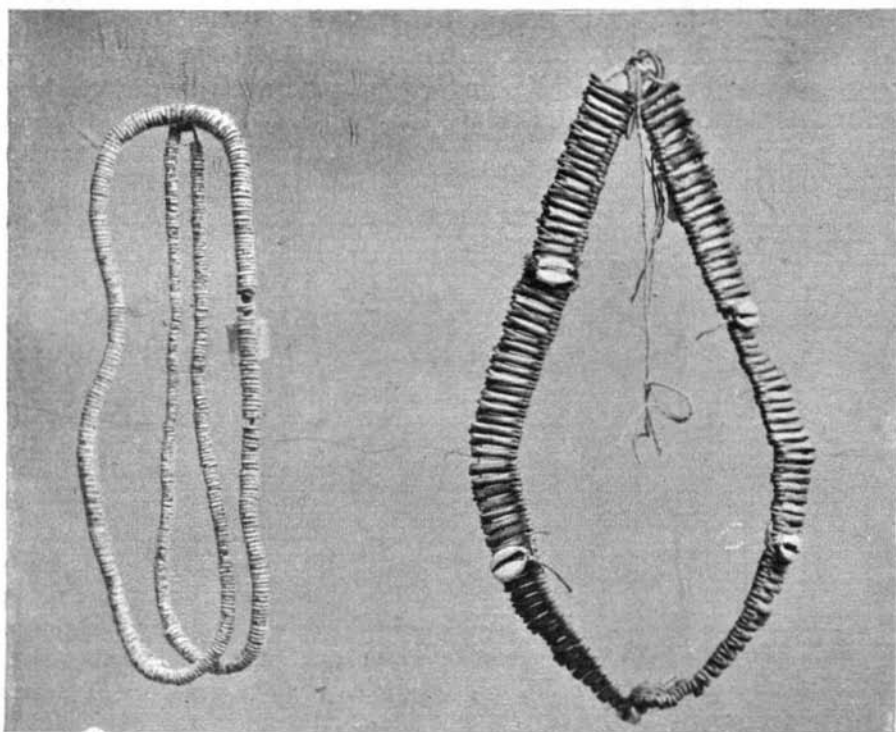
so many of the Turkana ornaments are made is either of local manufacture or is obtained from the Karamojo tribes on the west. The brass—since it existed in the country before the arrival of trading caravans from the coast—must have found its way down by degrees from Abyssinia. Old Turkana men sometimes dispense with the great hair bag which is so common among the Sūk, and instead comb out and straighten, as far as possible, their own hair (which they encourage to grow as long as possible), and gradually train this hair, without any artificial additions, into a long, pendulous pod considerably over a foot long and only a few inches broad. This pod of hair, like the huge felted bag, is adorned with ostrich feathers, and terminates in a wire tail. The Turkana chiefs or head-men often wear on top of their coiffure actual *hats* made of felted human hair and adorned with kauri shells and brass beads. Some of the young men make handsome caps, the outside of which is set with a large number of short black ostrich feathers.

The skin in both the Turkana and Sūk is decorated by a sort of tattoo (see Fig. 472), in continuous lines or rows of spots round the shoulders and upper arms and extending over to the chest. The women generally ornament themselves in the same way over the stomach. These marks do not appear to be made by raised scars, as is so common elsewhere, but apparently by burning the skin, as the Masai women do, with some acrid juice. The *women* among the *Turkana* do not shave their heads.* Their hair is twisted into a number of tails, which hang straight down over the forehead and at the back of the head. A kind of bast is sometimes plaited in with the hair, to make these pigtailed stiff. The *Turkana girls* wear small *leather aprons* over the pudenda, decorated round the edge with innumerable little circular discs of ostrich-egg shell. From the waist-belt there also hangs at the back a long piece of dressed leather, decorated round the edge with brass beads. The front aprons in the *married women* are long both in front and behind. The women also wear rows of beads round the neck and girdles round the waist of the small bones or teeth of antelopes and goats strung together; or the girdle may be made of chains of iron or brass rings. The rings and discs in the ears and septum of the nose are like those worn by the men. They also stick the same quills or quill-shaped wires into their lower lips, and wear rings and bracelets round their arms and ankles. The *men* often wear *girdles* of large white beads or rounded segments of ostrich-egg shell strung together.

The *Turkana*, apparently, do not *circumcise*. Sometimes, like the Masai, they *remove* one of the *lower incisors*. The women occasionally wear

* Contrasting thus with the women of the Sūk and Masai, who almost invariably shave their head-hair.

cloaks of dressed leather in addition to the aprons already mentioned. The people of the agricultural section of the Sūk (which is that which inhabits the mountains to the south-west of Lake Rudolf) occasionally shield themselves from the cold by mantles of dressed skin, but as a rule the men wear much the same scanty clothing and the same adornments as the Turkana. The Sūk do *circumcise*—at least, circumcision is practised by that section of the Sūk people dwelling near Lake Baringo and in



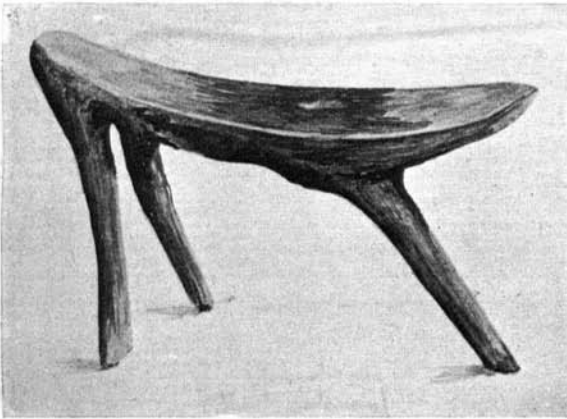
473. OSTRICH EGG AND ANTELOPE "KNUCKLE-BONE" NECKLACES: TURKANA, RIVER KERIO

the Upper Kerio Valley. Otherwise, with the exception of the Reshiat people at the north end of Lake Rudolf, and of the Masai and Nandi, none of the tribes of Nilotic origin or affinities have adopted this rite.

The Sūk, like the Turkana, pierce the lower lip, and insert a quill-shaped ornament. They wear much the same rings in their ears as do the Turkana. Ivory bracelets are sometimes seen in addition. The Sūk women sometimes shave the head, sometimes let the hair grow normally, and others again—especially the unmarried girls—cut the hair very close to the head on both sides, leaving a ridge like a cock's comb, which runs

the whole length of the head, from the forehead to the nape of the neck. There is evidently a close affinity, not only in language,* but in physical type, adornments of the body, manners, and customs, between the Sūk and Turkana, who might almost be described as one people. The Sūk and Turkana men carry about with them generally long tobacco receptacles made of the horn of the oryx (*Beisa*) antelope, and a small—I might almost write tiny—stool with three legs. This is really cut out of the forking branch of a tree. It is about eight inches long, and is hollowed out for sitting on (*vide* Fig. 474).

The *houses* of the *Turkana* are usually ramshackle huts of the most primitive description. The sides of these huts are made by sticking long, smooth branches into the ground round a circle, and bending the upper ends slightly inward.



474. A SŪK STOOL

On top of this is placed a rough framework of sticks or palm frond stems, on which grass is thrown and heaped with little or no attempt at thatching. The houses of the Sūk in the mountains are rather more elaborate; in fact, they resemble in material, though not in shape, the huts of the Sabei and Masaba people on the northern slopes of Mount

Elgon. The sides of the circular dwellings are made of long billets of hewn wood fixed tightly in the ground close to one another. The roof is tall and conical, like an extinguisher, and constructed of stalks of sorghum.

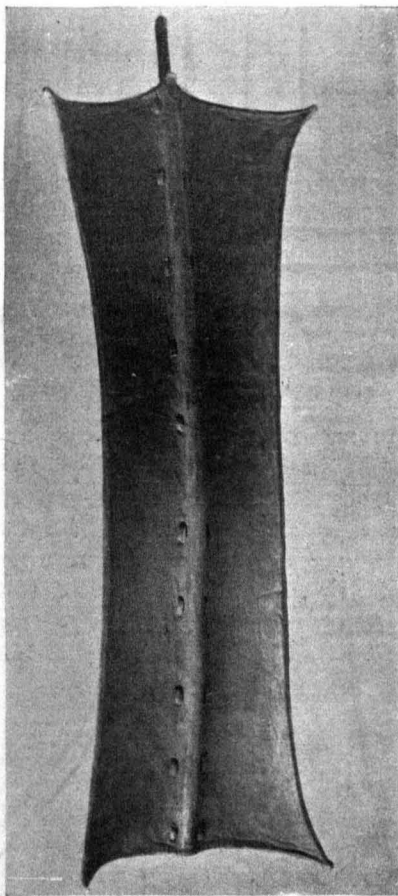
Both Sūk and Turkana are fond of *tobacco*, which they chew and take as snuff. They will eat almost anything, animal or vegetable, even *the flesh of dogs*. The western Sūk, who dwell in the mountains north of the Nandi Plateau and south-east of the Karamojo country, are painstaking *agriculturists*, growing chiefly sorghum, pumpkins and gourds, eleusine, sweet potatoes, beans, and tobacco. Their country is generally a little too dry for bananas. The Turkana and the Sūk dwelling in the plains to the north of Baringo cultivate but little, owing to the capricious nature of the rainfall and a constant succession of disastrous droughts with which the

* Which, however, in the Sūk shows considerable Nandi influence.

lower-lying country between Baringo and the north end of Lake Rudolf is afflicted. What little cultivation there is generally takes the form of sorghum fields. The Turkana make meal of the gingerbread-like rind of the Dūm palm fruits. The Dūm, or branding fan-palm (*Hyphaene thebaica*), which is so common in Upper Egypt and Nubia, extends its range to the regions round Lake Rudolf, and thence, with a great break of plateau land, into Eastern Africa in the vicinity of Kilimanjaro, continuing its range eastwards to the littoral of the Indian Ocean. It bears fruits about the size of a large plum or apple. These consist of a hard stone with a thin, chestnut-coloured rind of sweetish substance supposed to resemble gingerbread in taste.

The Turkana and the pastoral Sūk depend for their sustenance partly on the fish of Lake Rudolf and the neighbouring brackish swamps but mainly on the products of their flocks and herds. The Turkana keep *cattle* of the humped variety, *sheep* and *goats*, *donkeys*, and a few *camels*. They have numerous yellow pariah *dogs*. According to Count Teleki, the few camels possessed by the Turkana have only been recently obtained by them from the Burkenēji (Masai dwelling at the south end of Lake Rudolf), who obtained them from the Somali-like people to the east and north-east of Lake Rudolf. The Turkana donkeys are, of course, the same as those described in connection with the Masai. Their *sheep* very often have the black heads and necks and white bodies characteristic of the sheep of Galaland and Southern Abyssinia. The Turkana and Sūk *hunt elephants* in numbers, and used formerly to attack the buffalo in the same way, though the latter animal is nearly extinct through the ravages of the cattle plague. They also *lay snares* for ostriches and elephants. The last named are said to be caught in the following manner: Long strips of raw buffalo or ox hide are fastened together by secure knots until a leather rope of considerable length is made. One end of this is fastened firmly round the base of a big tree-trunk in one of the few river valleys in their country where the presence of a permanent water supply creates a forest growth. The other end of the long rope is fitted with a big running noose, and this noose is placed over the narrow path of mud or sand down which the elephants must pass on their way to the water. If it chances that an elephant puts his foot through the expanded noose, the weight of its body will cause its foot to sink some distance into the loose or muddy soil. The impetus of the animal's body will tighten the noose round his foot before he can lift it up, and so he is tied by the leg. It seems incredible that an elephant can be detained against his will by even a rope of leather, but the Turkana assert that such is the case. The western part of the Turkana country, inhospitable and waterless as it seems, swarms with elephants, who inhabit the dense forests of withered acacias.

The *weapons* of the Turkana and Sūk consist of spears with small, leaf-shaped blades, the crescent-shaped knives worn on the wrist, a heavy wooden club shaped something like a boomerang (the heavy end being often covered with a leather sheath), and bows and arrows. The shields of both Sūk and Turkana are of buffalo, ox, or giraffe hide, with a stick



475. A TURKANA SHIELD

down the middle as a midrib. This stick is bent to a shape something like a bow, and the middle is either scooped out or bent into a loop so as to admit of the passage of the hand. It is attached to the raw hide of the shield by strong leather stitches or lacing. The stick does not project below the bottom of the shield, but extends quite six inches above the top, where it is decorated with a tuft or plume of feathers, or a rosette of vegetable fibre. The shape is long and narrow, and the sides and ends are rather concave, so that the four angles project in points. The shield is not of very large size compared to those used by the Masai. It is an important fact that this peculiarly shaped leather shield is used all round the west, south, and east sides of Lake Rudolf by Turkana, Sūk, Burkeneji Masai, and the half-Hamitic islanders of Elmolo. At the north end of Lake Rudolf the Reshiat shield is very long and narrow, and is made of basketwork.

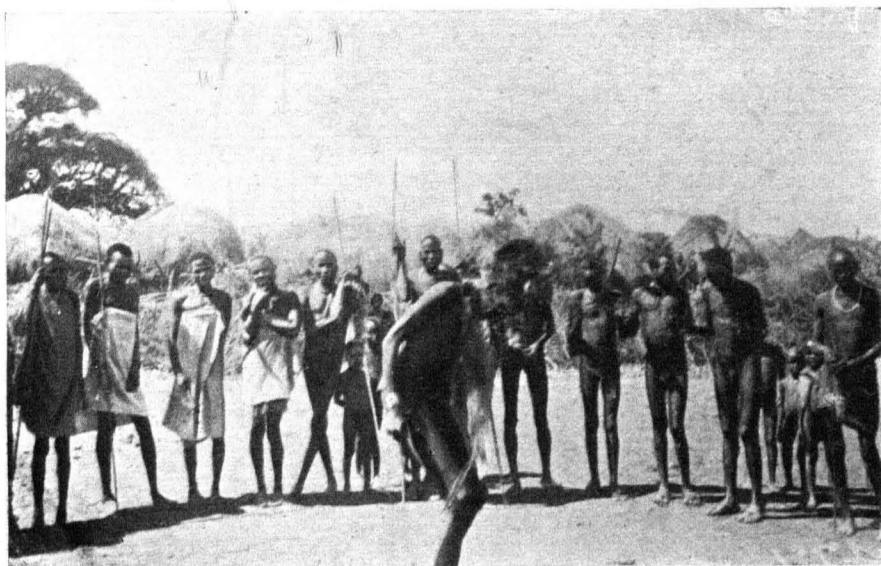
The Sūk and Turkana have very few manufactures except the making of weapons and ornaments of iron, brass, leather, ostrich shells, etc. The pastoral Sūk and Turkana hardly ever make

pottery, but obtain it generally by trade from the tribes to the west and north. They use gourds as milk vessels.

In their *marriage and birth customs* they resemble the Masai to a great extent, though they do not adopt such a rigid custom of obliging the warriors to remain unmarried or the married men not to indulge in fighting. Like the Masai, they bury little children generally in the

mother's hut, place the bodies of ordinary folk out in the bush to be devoured by hyænas, and bury their chiefs or principal medicine men under cairns of stones. They have much the same vague religious beliefs in a sky god, in rain-making, witchcraft, and medicine. They distinguish between their medicine men (who wield great power) and their chiefs—that is to say, those chiefs who are elected to keep order or to direct war. But very often the medicine man is a chief or leader by virtue of his power in medicine or in occult arts.

Their style of *dancing* merits a little description. The men stand in a semi-circle or in a horseshoe formation. A certain number of performers



476. SŪK DANCING

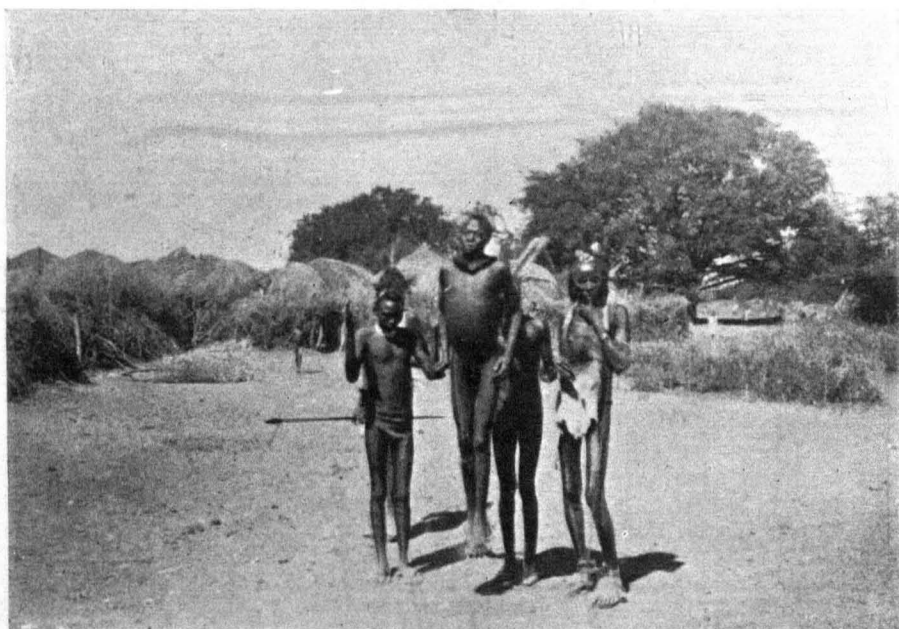
place themselves in a row within this horseshoe, and whilst the people of the outer circle clap their hands and sing, the selected band inside jumps up and down, keeping the body perfectly stiff and erect, with the hands pressed against the sides. They will sometimes jump quite a height into the air. Other of their dances are accompanied by obscene gestures. Their *songs* are like those of the Masai—a long wailing solo accompanied by a rhythmical chorus singing in a low key. Here is the notation of one which I took down on the phonograph:—

SOLO.

CHORUS.



The Turkana and Sūk must have been one people not many centuries ago. They are certainly the result of a mingling between the Masai stock (when the latter existed in the countries to the north of the Karamojo) and a Nile Negro race, with perhaps a dash of the Bantu. When the Masai moved away south-south-east from their original home, skirting the coast-lands to the west of Lake Rudolf, they were followed up by the Turkana-Sūk, who took their place, and who gradually drove away the more or less pure-blooded Masai from any country to the west of Lake Rudolf. It is possible that in the countries now occupied by the



477. SŪK DANCING

Turkana-Sūk there were vestiges of the same Dwarf race remaining which forms a marked element in the Andorobo and Elgunono, and which reappears in larger proportion in the population to the north of Lake Stephanie. This dwarfish, flat-faced type may be related to the Bushmen and Hottentots of South-West Africa. In spite of the tall stature of the average Sūk or Turkana, Count Teleki records having encountered several individuals—elderly men—who were not more than 4 feet 8 inches in height.

To the west and south-west of Mount Elgon, practically isolated from their Sūk and Masai relations by surrounding Nilotic and Bantu tribes, are

the handsome Elgumi people, a race with black skins but often with handsome Caucasian features. The Elgumi speak a language which is related to Masai and Karamojo. They are singularly nude and do little to adorn their heads or bodies. They are very fond of hunting and keep many small dogs, but they are also agriculturists.

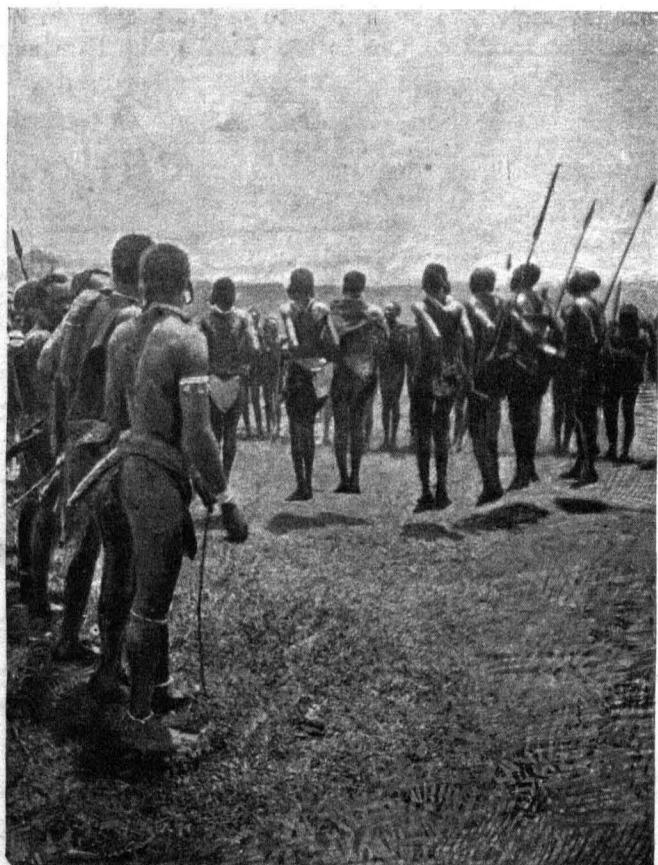
The remaining section to be dealt with of the peoples in the Uganda Protectorate which are allied more to the Masai group than any other is



478. SŪK ABOUT TO DANCE. (NOTE THE LIP-RING IN ONE MAN'S UPPER LIP)

that which may be called generically *Nandi*. The Nandi, or properly speaking the "Nandiek," are a sturdy race of mountaineers which inhabits portions of those uplands that are called the Nandi Plateau between the slopes of Mount Elgon on the north-east and the valley of the Nyando on the south. Very closely allied with them are the *Lumbwa* (who call themselves "Sikisi") and the *Sotik* on the south, the *Kamásia* (who call themselves "El Túkēn") on the north-east, the *Elgeyo*, *Mutei*, and *Japtuleil* on the north-east, and the *Elgonyi* (Lako, Noma) and Sabei tribes on the

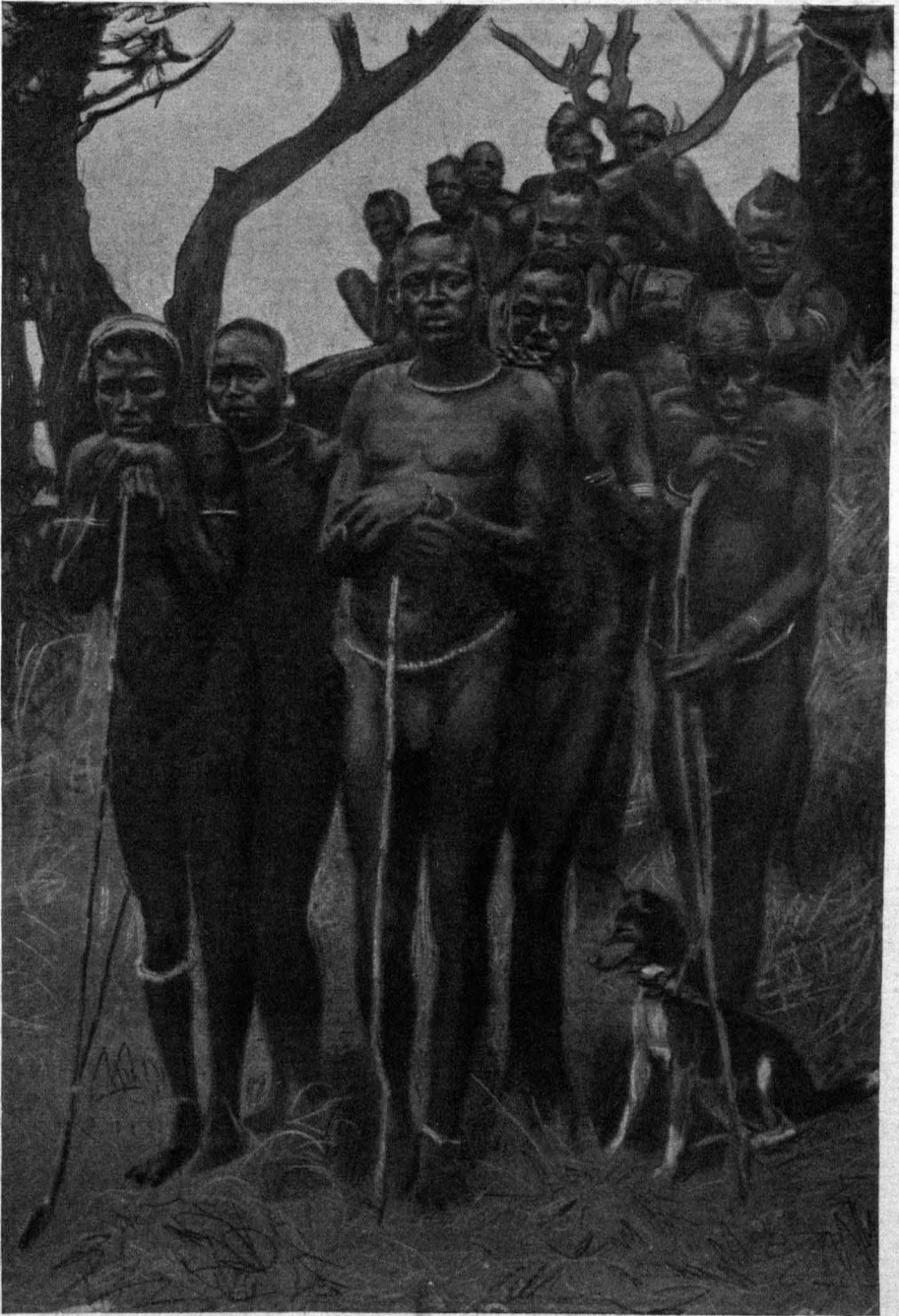
north and south flanks of Mount Elgon. In addition, there are mountain tribes allied to the Nandi in language on Mounts Debasien, Kamalinga, and Moroto, in the middle of the Karamoja country. On the south, again, across the German frontier, in those sparsely populated steppes between the Mau Escarpment and Ugogo, there are a few scattered tribes—



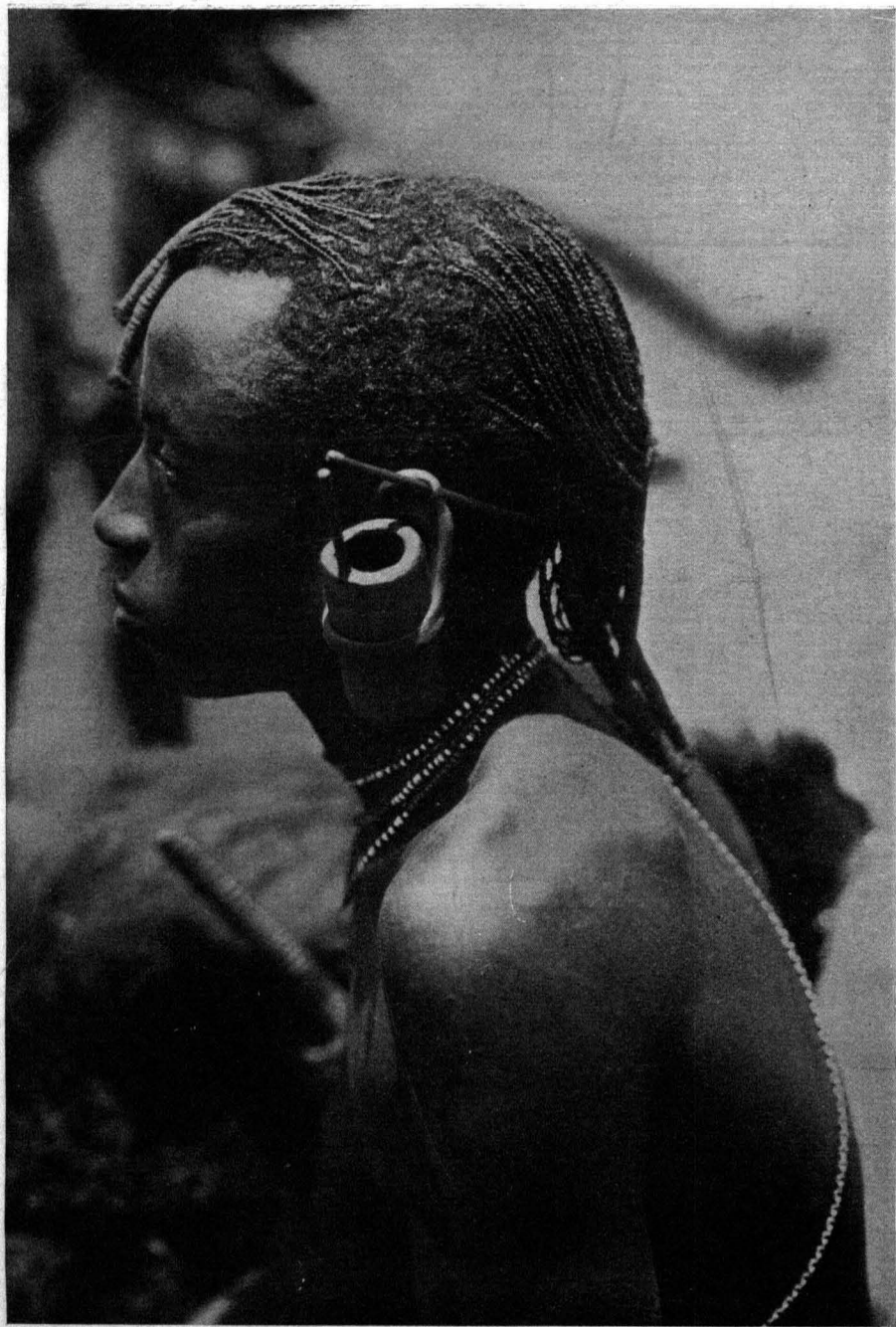
479. A DANCE OF THE SŪK PEOPLE. (NOTE THE FIGURES JUMPING IN THE AIR)

possibly offshoots of the Andorobo—who would appear to speak dialects akin to Nandi.

Closely related to the Nandi peoples (and the fact should be emphasised that all the tribes enumerated above speak practically but one language, with slight dialectal variations) are the Andorobo, and perhaps the Elgunono—two widely scattered helot nomad races who have attached



480. ELGUMI PEOPLE (SOMETIMES CALLED WAMIA)



481. AN ANDOROBO MAN OF THE HAMITIC TYPE

IMPERIAL

themselves to the pastoral Masai, and more or less in company with that proud people have extended their journeys at times near to Galaland on the north and to German East Africa on the south. The language ordinarily spoken by the Andorobo is at most only a dialect of Nandi, but in physical type the Andorobo are obviously a mixture of many different negro races. Though there is more homogeneity among the Nandi peoples, even they, according to Dr. Shrubsall, exhibit so much variation in their cranial characteristics that they represent the incomplete fusion of something like four stocks—the Nile Negro, the Masai, the Bantu, and some Pygmy element, possibly allied to the Bushmen of South Africa. There may even be a dash of a fifth element—the Gala. Among the Nandi one sees faces occasionally of almost Caucasian outline. The Lumbwa branch is a handsome people of tall stature. The Elgoni of South Elgon are slightly more Bantu in physique; the Sabei likewise, though there are occasionally faces among them that recall the Gala. Occasionally among the Nandi proper dwarfish types are encountered with strong brow ridges.

The *Andorobo* tend as a race towards short stature, but their *facial type* varies so much that it ranges between something very like the Bushman and individuals recalling the handsome features of the Somali. On the whole, the Andorobo and the scarcely distinguishable Elgunono must be considered to have absorbed a larger proportion of the pre-existing Dwarf race than the Nandi mountaineers. The Andorobo were probably formed during a relatively ancient invasion of Eastern Africa by the forerunners of the Masai, who found much of the country east of the Victoria Nyanza peopled by a race akin to the Bushmen-Hottentots. Traces of this race may be seen farther south in the Sandawi people in German Iranga. The *Sandawi* still speak a language which in its phonology resembles closely the Hottentot-Bushman, inasmuch as it possesses the same clicks and gutturals. I do not know whether any actual relationship has been pointed out in the vocabulary. The Sandawi are not particularly like the Bushmen in their physique, but more resemble the Nandi. Other observers than myself have been struck by the resemblance to the Bushman in individuals of these helot races which more or less accompany the Masai.

An interesting passage on the subject may be seen in Von Höhnel's narrative of Count Teleki's discovery of Lakes Rudolf and Stephanie (vol. i. p. 318). I am beginning to entertain the opinion myself that the first inhabitants of Africa south of the Sahara were a dwarfish Negro race, one half of which (the ancestors of the Bushmen-Hottentots) occupied the more open, grassy regions of Eastern Africa south of Abyssinia, while the other half (the ancestors of the Congo Pygmies) stole into the dense



482. TWO ANDOROBO OF THE HAMITIC TYPE



483. AN ANDOROBO OF THE PYGMY TYPE